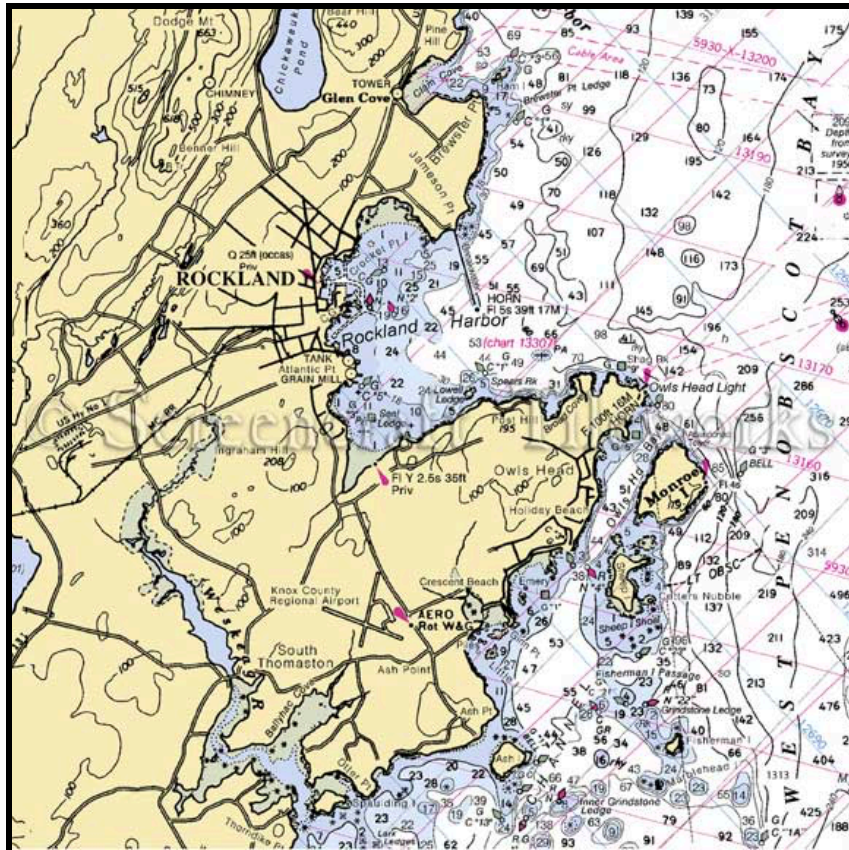


# Regional School Unit #13

28 Lincoln Street, Rockland, ME 04841



## Special Education Reference Guide for General Educators



# Letter to Staff

Dear General Educators:

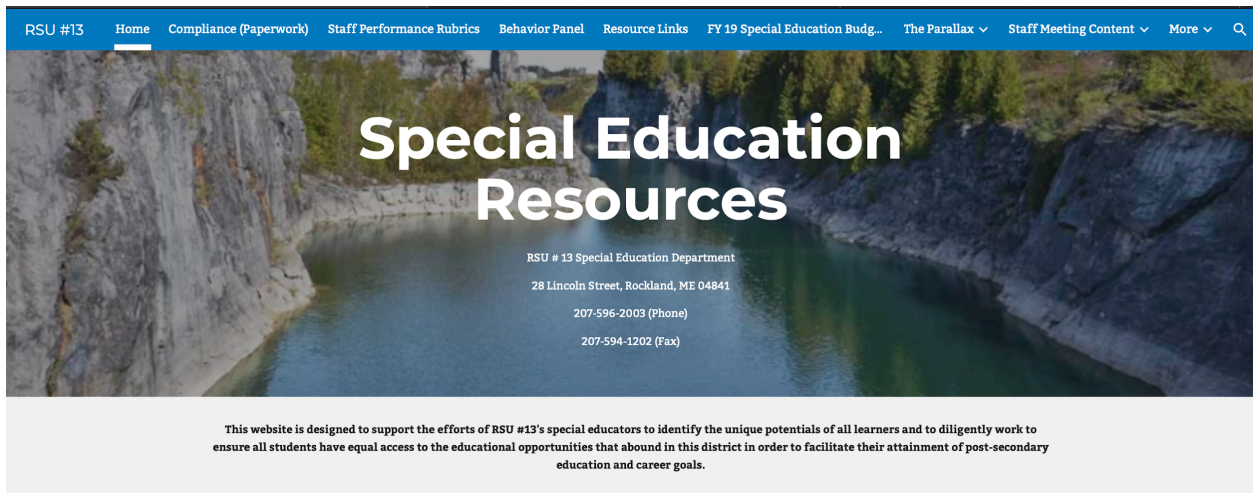
The purpose of this handbook is to help general education staff build their understanding of the processes, nuances, and intricacies of special education. This realm is governed strictly by federal law, primarily the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and state law, primarily Maine's Unified Special Education Regulations (MUSER), and, as a result, is quite complicated. Its associated legal framework mandates the majority of decisions and actions made by special educators and administrators and, while this framework often puts us in awkward, unpopular positions, we must adhere to these expectations. For example, the laws dictate that we must schedule and hold many IEP meetings, that a general education teacher must attend IEP meetings, that accommodations on IEPs must be implemented by all providers, that present level information must be provided by general educators, and that certain children simply don't qualify for special education.

As such, we have endeavored, in this guide, to better explain our work in the hopes that we can facilitate increased levels of collaboration and understanding amongst our general education peers. We recognize all educators are guided by actions and decisions that are in what they perceive to be the best interests of their students and know that, together, we can foster the best outcomes for all of our students. If you have questions that remain unanswered after reviewing the information contained in this guide, please don't hesitate to contact one of your building's special educators or RSU 13's Department of Special Education (207-596-2003). I hope this helps!

Sincerely,

Jess Yates  
Special Education Director  
Regional School Unit 13

# RSU #13's Special Education Resource Site



<https://sites.google.com/view/rsu13-specialresources/home?authuser=0>

Please check out the Special Education Department's website for helpful information, guidance documents, and weblinks. In addition to special education resources, there are a number of items specific to the needs of regular educators on the "General Educator Resource" tab. You can access the site via RSU 13's webpage (Click on "Central Office" and select "Special Education Resource Site" from the drop down menu).

## Special Education Department

The Special Education Department is located in the McLain School, located at 28 Lincoln Street, Rockland, Maine. The following personnel can be reached by calling 207-596-2003:

Director of Special Education: Jessica Yates

IEP Coordinator: Lawrence Schooley

Special Services Office Coordinator: Rebecca Tucker

Special Services Administrative Assistant:

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## **The Basic Steps in Special Education**

Children can have all sorts of difficulties growing up. Sometimes these difficulties are immediately obvious; and sometimes they don't appear until a child is in school. Some children have trouble learning to read and write. Others have a hard time remembering new information. Still others may have trouble with their speech, or behavior. For some children, growing up can be very hard to do!

When a child is having trouble in school, it is important to find out why. The child may have a disability. By law, schools must provide special help to eligible children with disabilities. This help is called **special education and related services**.

There's a lot to know about the process by which children are identified as having a disability and in need of special education and related services. This handbook is devoted to helping regular educators learn about this process.

This overview, entitled "The Basic Steps in Special Education", summarizes the complicated process leading to a child's receipt of special education and related services.

## **Step 1: A child is identified as possibly needing special education and related services.**

There are two primary ways in which children are identified as possibly needing special education and related services: the system known as Child Find, or by a parent or school based referral.

**Child Find**: Each state is required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities in the state who need special education and related services. To do so, states conduct what are known as Child Find activities. Please review RSU #13's child find statement:

### **Child Find for Students with Disabilities**

RSU #13 has the legal responsibility to locate, evaluate, and identify all children of school age (5-20 years), residing within Cushing, Owls Head, Rockland, Thomaston, and South Thomaston who may be in need of special education services due to a disability. This includes students who are attending public or private schools. Children may be eligible for special education under the following disability categories:

<b>Autism</b>	<b>Deaf-blindness</b>	<b>Deafness</b>
<b>Developmental Delay (3-5)</b>	<b>Developmental Delay (K)</b>	<b>Emotional Disturbance</b>
<b>Hearing Impairment</b>	<b>Intellectual Disability</b>	<b>Multiple Disabilities</b>
<b>Orthopedic Impairment</b>	<b>Other Health Impairment</b>	<b>Specific Learning Disability</b>
<b>Speech/Language Impairment</b>	<b>Traumatic Brain Injury</b>	<b>Visual Impairment, Including Blindness</b>

If you have a child, or know of a child, residing within Cushing, Owls Head, Rockland, Thomaston, or South Thomaston who may have a disability and may need special education services, or if you would like additional information, please contact RSU #13's Office of Special Education at 207-596-2003.

Please note that children from birth to age 5 have the same rights through the Child Development Services (CDS) System. If you have a child, or know of a child, who is from birth to age 5, resides within the towns of RSU #13, and may have a disability, please contact CDS at 207-594-5993.

**Referral or request for evaluation:** A school professional may ask that a child be evaluated to see if he or she has a disability. (Please see separate "Special Education Referral Process" section for details.) Parents may also contact the child's teacher or other school professional to ask that their child be evaluated. Referrals must be in writing.

Parent consent is needed before a child may be evaluated. The Maine Unified Special Education Regulations (MUSER) state that evaluations must be completed within 45 school days after RSU #13's Special Education Director documents receipt of the parent's written consent for evaluation.

## **Step 2: Child is evaluated.**

Evaluation is an essential early step in the special education process for a child. It is intended to answer these questions:

- Does the child have a disability that requires the provision of special education and related services?
- Does the child experience adverse effect on academic and/or functional performance as a direct result of the identified disability?
- Does the child require special education and related services to remediate the adverse effect and to access the general education program?

By law, the initial evaluation of the child must be “full and individual” – which is to say, focused on that child and that child alone. The evaluation must assess the child in areas related to the child’s suspected disability. Schools have 45 school days to conduct evaluations and reconvene the IEP Team in order to discuss eligibility. Parents must receive a copy of all evaluation reports at least 3 days prior to the IEP Team Meeting at which the evaluations will be discussed.

The IEP team, a group of qualified individuals that includes the parents and other professionals, uses the evaluation results to decide upon the child’s eligibility for special education and related services and to make decisions about an appropriate educational program for the child.

### **Step 3: Eligibility is decided.**

The IEP team reviews both the child’s evaluation results and data about the child’s school performance. Together, they decide if the child is a “child with a disability,” as defined by IDEA, and if the child is experiencing adverse effect as a result of that disability. Eligibility decisions are based on IDEA criteria and are guided by the team’s completion of state forms as appropriate for each category:

<b>Eligibility Category</b>	<b>Necessary Forms</b>
Autism	Adverse Effect Form
Deaf-Blindness	Adverse Effect Form
Deafness	Adverse Effect Form
Developmental Delay (3-5)	Adverse Effect Form



Developmental Delay (K)	Adverse Effect Form
Emotional Disturbance	Adverse Effect Form
Hearing Impairment	Adverse Effect Form
Intellectual Disability	Adverse Effect Form
Multiple Disabilities	Adverse Effect Form
Orthopedic Impairment	Adverse Effect Form
Other Health Impairment	Adverse Effect Form
Specific Learning Disability	Specific Learning Disability Eligibility Form
Speech/Language Impairment	Speech or Language Impairment Eligibility Form
Traumatic Brain Injury	Adverse Effect Form
Visual Impairment, Including Blindness	Adverse Effect Form

If the parents do not agree with the eligibility decision, they may ask for mediation or a hearing to challenge the decision.

If the IEP team determines the child meets the criteria of a disability category and is experiencing adverse effect from that disability, the team must then answer the remaining eligibility question: Does the child require special education and related services in order to benefit from his or her educational program? If so, the child is deemed eligible for special education and an IEP is developed.

Although the law stipulates that the IEP team meet within 30 calendar days after a child is determined eligible to write an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)**, it is also permissible for the team to write the IEP team at the eligibility meeting.

\*\*\*Please note that services MAY NOT begin until the school receives signed consent for the “Initial Provision of Services” from the parent. It is important to ensure that this consent is informed consent; as such, parents must sign the consent box (see below) at the end of the written notice for the meeting at which the IEP team qualified the student. If the parents do not give consent for special education and related services, the child will not be able to receive special education services, even if the school disagrees with the parents’ decision.

If the parents do not agree with the IEP and placement, they may discuss their concerns with other members of the IEP team and try to work out an agreement. If they still disagree, parents may meet with the Director of Special Education, ask for mediation, or the school district may offer mediation. Parents may file a complaint with the state education agency and may request a due process hearing, at which time mediation must be available. This process may occur at any time during the period in which a child is receiving special education and related services.

#### **Step 4: Special education and related services are provided.**

The school makes sure the child's IEP is implemented as soon as possible following the IEP team meeting, but no later than 30 days after the IEP team's initial identification of the child. Parents must receive a copy of the child's IEP within 21 school days of the date of the meeting. Each of the child's teachers and service providers should have access to the IEP and understand his or her specific responsibilities for carrying out the IEP. These responsibilities include not only the special education and related services, but also the accommodations, modifications, and supports required by the child to benefit from his or her education.

#### **Step 5: Progress is measured and reported to parents.**

The child's progress toward his or her annual goals is measured by means specified in the IEP. Parents are regularly informed of their child's progress. Progress reports usually are provided to parents on the same schedule as student report cards, but they sometimes are provided on a more frequent basis.

#### **Step 6: IEP is annually reviewed.**

The IEP team reviews the child's IEP at least once a year (within 364 days of the creation of the prior IEP), or more often if the parents or school ask for a review. The IEP is revised and updated at the child's annual review. Parents are team members and must be invited to participate in these meetings. Concerns may also be discussed more informally through a staffing, after which an IEP may be amended.

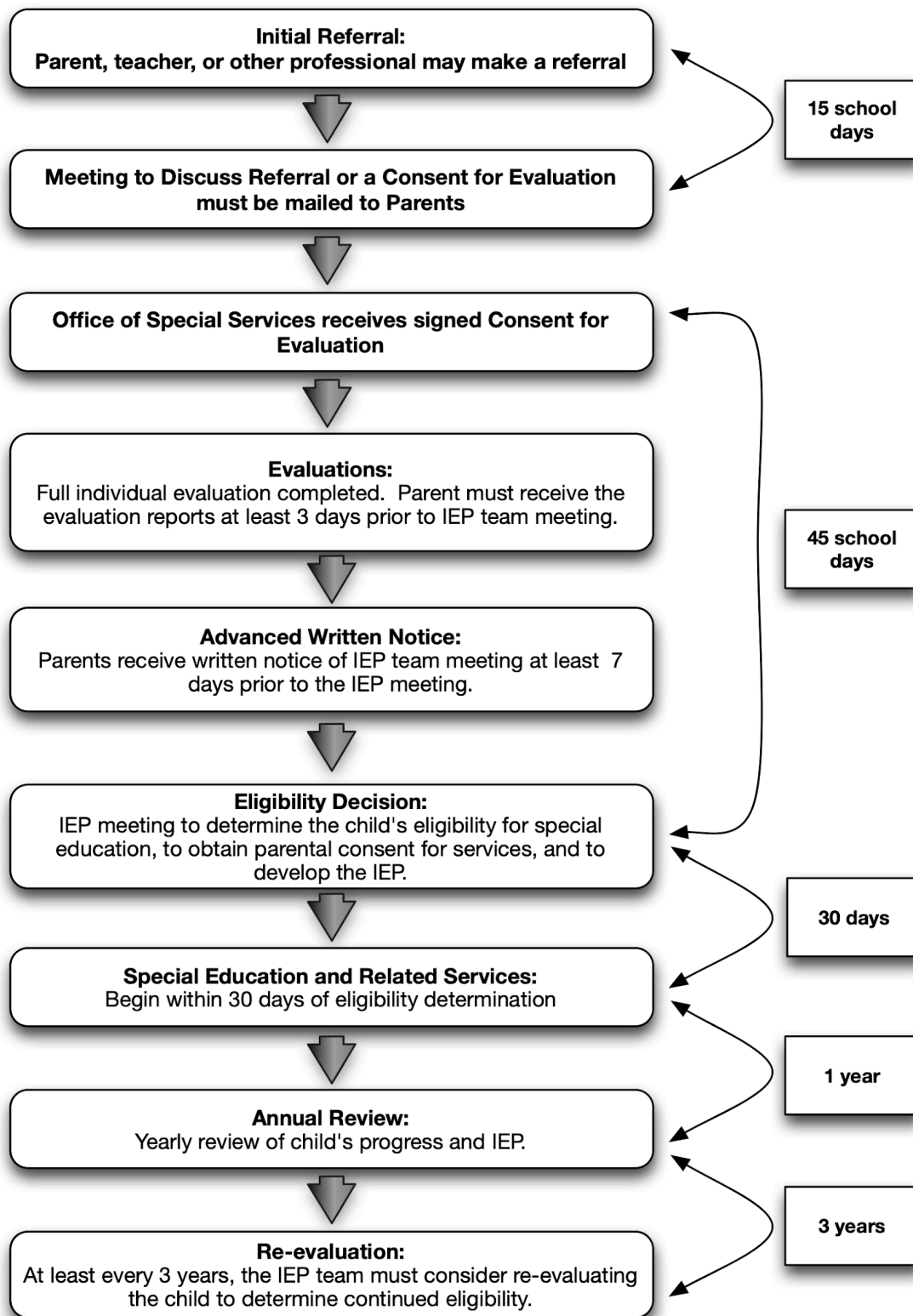
If parents do not agree with their child's IEP and placement, they may discuss their concerns with other members of the IEP team and try to work out an agreement. There are several options, including additional testing, an independent evaluation, meeting with RSU #13's Special Education Director, or asking for mediation or a due process hearing. Parents may also file a complaint with the state education agency if they believe a violation of the law has occurred.

## **Step 7: Child is re-evaluated.**

At least every three years, the IEP team must consider re-evaluating a child. This evaluation is often called a "triennial." Its purpose is to determine if the child continues to be a child with a disability, as defined by IDEA, continues experiencing adverse effect, and continues to require special education and related services. However, the child can be re-evaluated more often if conditions warrant, or if the child's parent or teacher asks for a new evaluation.

Adapted from: <http://www.nichcy.org/EducateChildren/Steps/Pages/default.aspx>

## **The Basic Steps in Special Education Timeline**



## Special Education Referral Process

## **Initial referrals**

### **Academic**

If there are academic concerns:

1. Teacher begins RTI Tier 1 intervention.
2. After completion of 12 weeks of Tier 1, the SIT meets to discuss the next steps.
  - Please provide information regarding student attendance for the SIT meeting.
  - Invite special education teacher/speech therapist.
3. If warranted, SIT will recommend Tier 2 intervention.
4. After completion of 12 weeks of RTI Tier 2, the SIT should reconvene to discuss next steps.
  - Invite school psychologist and special education teacher/speech therapist to provide recommendations regarding either:
    - i. Continuing RTI Tier 2, or
    - ii. Making a special education referral.

### **Behavior**

If there are behavioral concerns:

1. Teacher begins RTI Tier 1 intervention and will:
  - a. Collect behavioral data needs consistently over a minimum two week period.
  - b. Compile a list of accommodations, modifications and interventions being used or tried.
    - i. Include start date, end date if applicable, and outcome.
  - c. Compile data regarding office referrals, incident reports and attendance. 2. If warranted, convene a SIT meeting to determine next steps.
2. If warranted, convene a SIT meeting to determine next steps:
  - a. Invite: School counselor, special education teacher/speech therapist to provide recommendations regarding either:
    - i. Continuing RTI Tier 2, or
    - ii. Making a special education referral.

### **Speech**

If there are speech concerns:

1. Referral based on DIAL 4 results (kindergarten screening):

- a. If student falls below the 8th percentile in one domain, the SLP / OT will re- screen after 6 weeks of kindergarten.
- b. If the student falls below the 8th percentile in two or more domains, the student will proceed directly to referral for special education.
  - i. Speech therapist in the building is responsible for reviewing all DIAL screening results and making recommendations for re-screen or referral based on results.
    1. Speech therapist will:
      - a. Complete referral paperwork.
      - b. Meet with the building principal to initiate the Referral / Initial Evaluation Process Checklist and sign appropriate paperwork.
      - c. Copy all paperwork and send to central office.
- c. If the student receives a score of “poor” on the intelligibility portion of the DIAL 4, the speech therapist will:
  - i. Conduct an observation, including a language sample with an intelligibility measure,
  - ii. Provide a written summary to specify if the student requires further evaluation.
  - iii. Follow the referral process as outlined.

1. Referral based on generalized speech and language concerns

- a. Notify speech therapist.
- b. Speech therapist will conduct an observation and provide a written report to determine if further evaluation is required.
  - i. If appropriate, the speech therapist will:
    1. Complete referral paperwork with the teacher.
    2. Meet with the building principal to initiate the Referral / Initial Evaluation Process Checklist and sign needed paperwork.
    3. Copy all paperwork and send to central office.

If there are motor concerns:

1. OT /PT will conduct an observation and provide a written report to determine if further evaluation is required or to suggest accommodations.
2. OT will contact parents to inquire about medical information that would determine the necessity for school interventions.

### **Parent Referrals**

If a parent expresses a desire to refer his or her child for any type of special education testing:

1. Request the parent to send a signed request for testing to the Special Education Director.
  - a. Special Education Director will review said request.
    - i. Documented receipt of referral is when the Referral has been signed and dated by the Special Education Director.
  - b. Special Education Office will assign a case manager to manage the Referral.
  - c. Case manager must schedule an IEP team meeting to review the Referral request within 15 school days of the Director's signature on the Referral.
2. School staff should gather performance, attendance, and intervention data, as appropriate, to bring to the IEP referral meeting for the team's review.

## Description of Evaluations

Evaluations are necessary to determine if a child is eligible for special education and related services. The evaluation process identifies your child's strengths, areas of need, and how he or she may learn. This information is used to decide if a child has a disability and is eligible for special education and related services. If the team decides a child is eligible for services, the information gained from the evaluation process will be used to help create the child's IEP. If the team decides a child is not eligible for services, the information gained from the evaluation process can be helpful for identifying appropriate general education accommodations.

Academic/Developmental Testing: is designed to determine what the child's academic/developmental progress is within specific academic areas; i.e., overall development, reading, math, and spelling. The child's learning and developmental achievement will be compared to the achievement of children in his/her school and children throughout the country. Examples include: *Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Wechsler Individual Achievement Test IV, Peabody Individual Achievement Test, Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement IV*

Intellectual Testing: is designed to measure different types of abilities such as what the child can do and how he or she does it, and involves the individual administration of intelligence tests. Examples include: *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children V, Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence – 2, Differential Ability Scale -2, Woodcock Johnson Test of Cognitive Ability-III, Ray Complex Figure Test*

Observation: is completed in the child's learning environment (including the regular classroom setting) to document the child's academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty. Examples include: *Observation by the Special Education Teacher and/or Therapist, Student Observation System*

Learning Development Testing: is designed to determine what the child's strengths and weaknesses are in terms of processing information. Examples include: *Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development, Sensory-motor tests, Speech and hearing tests*

Speech/language Testing: is designed to determine the student's communication skills in articulation, voice, fluency, expressive language, and receptive language. Examples include: *Test of Language Development, Receptive, Expressive Test of Language,*



*Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals, Goldman Fristoe Test of Articulation*

Psychological Evaluation: is designed to assess personality and/or behavioral functioning. Commonly used evaluation methods include parent and child interviews, personality inventories, behavior rating scales and projective tests. Examples include: *Behavior Assessment Scales for Children, Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales-2, Adaptive Behavior Assessment System-2, Multidimensional Anxiety Scale, Brown ADD Scales*

Physical Therapy Evaluation: is designed to assess a student's large motor development. Evaluations include, but are not limited to, range of motion, manual muscle assessment, functional skill performance, mobility in the environment, reflex integration development, muscle tone assessment, gross motor skills (e.g., balance, coordination, agility, skill refinement), and review of any equipment needs the student may have. Examples include: *Range of Motions Measure*

Occupational Therapy Evaluation: is designed to assess the functional needs of the student related, but not limited, to the performance of: self-help skills, adaptive behavior and play, sensory development and integration, motor development and integration, and posture. Examples include: *Developmental Test of Visual Motor Integration, Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency*

Interest and Aptitude Assessment: is designed to assess strengths, weaknesses, and interests as they relate to vocational preparation and choice. Examples include: *Myers Briggs Type Indicator, Bridges Program*

Additional Assessments: are designed to collect essential information on health, social, or developmental history, behavior (may be completed by an interview with the parents, school staff, or child), or sensory assessment in vision or hearing. Examples include: *Functional Behavioral Assessment, Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales-2, Adaptive Behavior Assessment System-2*

Other: There may be other types of assessments that would give valuable information about the student. Examples include: *Student Interview, Structured Developmental History*

Common Assessments\*(used throughout the district for all students): An assessment created to evaluate all students from the same grade level or course. Examples

include: *Developmental Reading Assessment, Observation Survey, Northwest Educational Assessment, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, Maine Education Assessment, Diagnostic Accuplacer, FastBridge, Aimsweb*

\*The IEP team may identify accommodations or modifications for common assessments. However, each test has a specific set of allowable accommodations and the support used for instruction may not be permitted for some tests.

Adapted from: <http://www.maine.gov/doe/specialed/forms/index.html>

## **Special Education Eligibility Categories**

- Autism
- Deaf-Blindness
- Deafness
- Developmental Delay (3-5, K)
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment, Including Blindness

For more information on the eligibility categories in the Maine Unified Special Education Regulations, please visit

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/State%20Regulation%20Chapter%20101MUSER.pdf>

# Special Education and Related Service Categories

Children eligible for special education may receive, depending on their disability related needs, a variety of special education and related services which include:

## \*Special Education Services:

- Specially Designed Instruction
  - Math,
  - Reading,
  - Writing,
  - Executive Functioning Skills,
  - Social Skills
  - Functional Life Skills
- Speech and Language Services
- Consultation
- Tutorial Instruction
- Extended School Year Services

## \*Related Services:

- Speech and Language Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Social Work Services
- Nursing Services
- Behavioral Health Day Treatment
- Transportation

**\*\*Please note that related services are provided to a child in order to enable him or her to access and benefit from his or her special education program. They are included, as necessary, in a child's program in addition to his/her special education services, and are not "stand alone" services. *For example, a child cannot receive only occupational therapy services because they are a related service, and not a special education service.***

# Continuum of Placements for Identified Children

Services for children with disabilities will vary between children depending upon their strengths and needs. In all cases, final determination of educational services for a student with disabilities will be dependent upon the identified needs of the student as determined by the IEP team and in recognition of the need to ensure the student receives the most appropriate education in the least restrictive environment possible.

A continuum of services is available in this Department to meet the individual needs of students and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

General Education with consultation: The student is served in the general education classroom without any accommodations or modifications to the curriculum, instruction, testing, or grading. The special education teacher is responsible for consulting with the teacher(s) and monitoring the student's progress according to the IEP, or as determined by the IEP team. Example: *A student who fully participates in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade general education math class without modifications or accommodations. The special education teacher meets the general education teacher once a month to make sure the student continues to make progress in the general education curriculum.*

General Education with consultation/accommodations: The child is served in the general education classroom with consultation and support from the special education teacher. The general education teacher is responsible for direct instruction, testing, grading, and behavioral management as specified in the IEP. The special education teacher may assist the general education teacher by designing and making material adaptations and accommodations, etc. Example: *A student who participates in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade general education science program with accommodations, which allow for shortened assignments and tests/assignments read to the student orally.*

General Education with direct special education support in the classroom: The child receives special education support for the general education curriculum in the general education setting. The special education teacher, therapist, or trained educational technician will be in the general education classroom to provide direct instruction, instructional support, and other assistance to the child or a group of children. Example: *A 2<sup>nd</sup> grade student participates in the classroom with education technician support for positive behavioral support.*

General Education with direct special education support outside the classroom: The child receives special education support for the general education curriculum outside the general education setting. When the services cannot be appropriately provided in the general education setting, the child may receive selected services he or she needs in a separate education setting. Example: *An 11<sup>th</sup> grade student receives an English credit by participating in an English class in the Resource Room with a special education teacher.*

Separate Special Education Services: The student is served in a separate special education setting outside of the general education classroom for the majority of the day. The student has significant special education needs that cannot be satisfactorily achieved in a less restrictive setting. Example: *A 4<sup>th</sup> grade student receives reading, writing, math, social studies, science, and social skills instruction in a self-contained setting and participates in physical education and recess with his peers without disabilities.*

Out of District Placement: The student is served in a specialized school specifically designed to address special learning or behavioral needs. The student has significant special education needs that cannot be met in their community's public school. Example: *A 7<sup>th</sup> grade student receives all of her education in a private day treatment school setting.*

# Extended School Year (ESY) Services

## What are Extended School Year (ESY) Services?

- ESY services are special education and related services that are provided to a child with a disability between the ages of 3 and 20 beyond the normal school year, usually in the summer. These services are provided ONLY for qualifying children who have a documented loss of skills over breaks, and who subsequently can't regain those lost skills in a reasonable amount of time.

## How much do ESY Services cost?

- ESY Services are provided for qualifying children with disabilities at no cost to the parents.

## Who decides if a student qualifies for ESY Services?

- The IEP Team

## What is the process used to determine if a child qualifies for ESY Services (if this has not already been decided at the child's annual review)?

- The child's parent(s) or special education case manager schedules an IEP meeting.
- The IEP Team reviews available data and decides if the child needs ESY Services.
- The special education case manager documents the meeting with a Written Notice, and amends the student's IEP to reflect the provision of ESY services. Copies of both documents are provided to the parents.

## What "available data" does the IEP Team use to make their decision?

- The IEP Team reviews information (progress reports, assessments, parent reports, teacher observations, etc.) related to:
  - The significance of the child's disability
  - The child's progress towards his/her IEP goals
  - The documented impact of service interruptions (such as various holiday breaks) on skill retention
  - Data related to the child's ability to regain, in a reasonable amount of time, skills previously mastered

**If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact your child's special education case manager!**

# **A Regular Educator's Guide to Effectively Participating in an IEP Team Meeting**

You are an important member of the IEP team! You have unique insights in regards to the child's functionality in the general education setting, both academically and in interactions with his or her peers. You also have a sense of what typically developing peers can and cannot do and can provide important information and insight about the child. Just as the other members will prepare for the IEP meeting, you must also take time to prepare. Use this guide to prepare for the meeting.

## **Things to bring (as appropriate):**

- Most recent classroom assessment data/grades
- Most recent NWEA scores
- Other evaluative data: Accuplacer Scores, Fountas and Pinnell assessments, etc.
- Information from Title One service providers
- Student work samples
- Documentation of RTI measures including:
  - Appropriate building-based forms
  - List of interventions attempted
  - Data to support outcomes
- Completed Regular Education Teacher Input Form

## **Things to talk about (as appropriate):**

- Student strengths
- Student performance and progress in comparison to same-aged peers in the areas of:
  - Academic/Content Area Performance:
    - Math, Reading, Writing, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Health, etc. (as appropriate)
  - Functional Performance:
    - Organizational and study skills
  - Peer relationships
  - Student performance as it relates to Maine's Guiding Principles:



<https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/THE%20GUIDING%20PRINCIPLES.pdf>

- What skills the student has learned and what skills the student needs to learn next.
- Specific accommodations you find are helpful/not helpful in supporting the student.

### **Things to note:**

- Please do not mention other students' names in IEP meetings. We must maintain strict confidentiality at all times.
- If you think a student may need specific supports or services, please consider talking with the student's case manager prior to the meeting.
- If you are unable to attend the IEP meeting, please plan to submit a written statement regarding student progress to the case manager for review at the meeting.
- If the general education teacher is not at the meeting, he or she is compelled to comply with the content of the IEP without having an opportunity to give his or her feedback. Please participate, either in person or via the submission of written input!

## **A More In-Depth Look at... Growth Mindset**

The concept of Growth Mindset has been a part of 'educational conversations' since Dr. Carol Dweck published her book, Mindset: The New Psychology of Success, in 2007. While this concept applies to everyone, it is particularly insightful in regards to how educators approach, and program for, their students. People, including educators, have one of two main beliefs about intelligence:

- Fixed mindset: People believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort. (They're wrong.)
- Growth mindset: People believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. Virtually all great people have had these qualities.

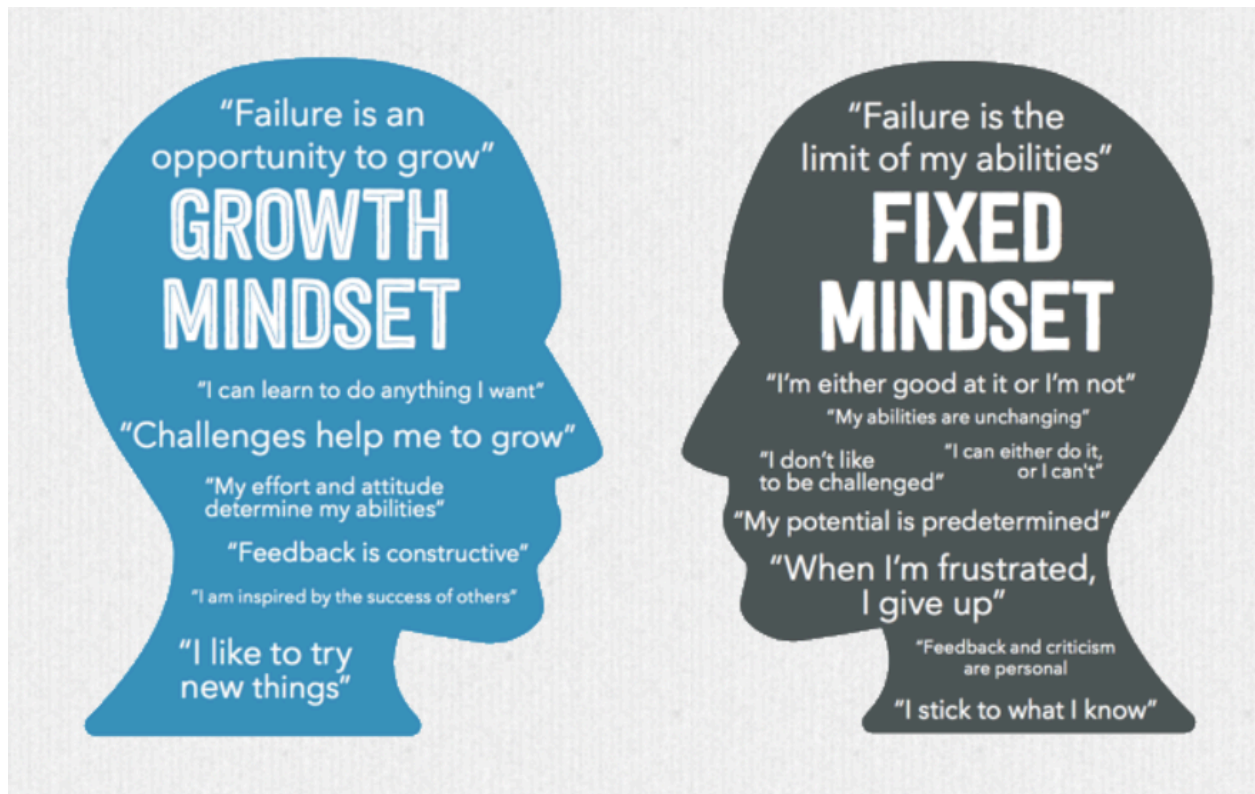
Dweck determined that the beliefs children have about intelligence and effort impact the choices they make about learning. As such, teaching a growth mindset can foster student motivation and productivity, as well as enhance relationships between educators and students.

The application of a growth mindset approach is extremely important in educational programs for students with disabilities because educators must understand that their abilities can be developed through hard work. No student is 'fixed;' every student has the potential to grow and achieve at high levels. Perhaps Benjamin Barber, an eminent sociologist, said it best when he noted, "I don't divide the world into the weak and the strong, or the successes and the failures... I divide the world into the learners and non-learners."

For more information about growth mindset check out the following links:

- <https://mindsetonline.com/index.html>
- <https://blogs.wsj.com/informedreader/2007/02/13/the-praise-a-child-should-never-hear/>
- [https://www.edweek.org/media/ewrc\\_mindsetintheclassroom\\_sept2016.pdf](https://www.edweek.org/media/ewrc_mindsetintheclassroom_sept2016.pdf)

- <http://northstarpaths.com/visuals/>
- [www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/12/how-praise-became-a-consolation-prize/510845/?fbclid=IwAR2jjEsbSQ0vfuaTseO7XJcQuWKBwllbNuxCyeH1TaYHC19eaTq6js6XDPM](http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/12/how-praise-became-a-consolation-prize/510845/?fbclid=IwAR2jjEsbSQ0vfuaTseO7XJcQuWKBwllbNuxCyeH1TaYHC19eaTq6js6XDPM)
- <https://www.peacefirst.org/>
- [https://www.mindsetkit.org/static/files/YCLA\\_LessonPlan\\_v10.pdf](https://www.mindsetkit.org/static/files/YCLA_LessonPlan_v10.pdf)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtKJrB5rOKs>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7FdMi03Czl>
- <https://ideas.classdojo.com/i/growth-mindset-1>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLeUvZvuvAs>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUm-vAOmV1o>
- <https://www.khanacademy.org/youcanlearnanything>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=258WM07yssg>
- [https://biglifejournal.com/collections/all?gclid=EAlalQobChMIk\\_LJ0-He3glVy7fAC\\_h09PwMREAAAYASAAEglGvD\\_BwE](https://biglifejournal.com/collections/all?gclid=EAlalQobChMIk_LJ0-He3glVy7fAC_h09PwMREAAAYASAAEglGvD_BwE)
- <https://biglifejournal.com/pages/start-here>
- <https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog>



## **A More In-Depth Look at... Specific Learning Disabilities**

Specific Learning Disability is one of the fifteen eligibility categories for special education services and, arguably, one of the most complicated. The specifications for eligibility have changed frequently as regulators attempt to match the standards in the federal regulations and to provide guidance for determinations of eligibility in this category.

A Specific Learning Disability means:

*A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. Specific learning disabilities do not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.*

To determine if a child is eligible under this category, there are a number of items that must be considered.

1. The team must first establish that the child is not achieving adequately for his or her age or grade in 8 areas of academic achievement (oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading fluency skills, reading comprehension, math calculation, or math problem solving).
2. The team must determine if the child was provided with appropriate instruction in regular education settings by qualified personnel (which includes RTI).
3. The team must review certain “rule out factors” to determine if the child’s inadequate achievement is “primarily” the result of:
  - a. Visual, hearing, or motor disability;
  - b. Intellectual disability;
  - c. Emotional disturbance;

- d. Environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage, and/or limited English proficiency.
- 4. The team must then determine whether there is a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both as compared to age, grade level standards, or intellectual development. To do so, the team must consider four separate categories:
  - a. Data collected when using a process based on the child's response to RTI,
  - b. Classroom performance data,
  - c. Achievement data based on summative or state assessments,
  - d. Psychological processing data.

**\*\*NOTE:** A child with uniformly low scores in any one of these areas does NOT present with a pattern of strengths of weaknesses and, therefore, is not eligible for services under this category. These children are known as "slow learners" who require extra supports in regular education and who do not have disabilities.

- 5. The team then needs to determine if the child requires special education because of his or her inadequate achievement and relevant pattern of strengths and weaknesses.

NOTE: There are cases in which a child may demonstrate inadequate achievement and a pattern of relevant strengths and weaknesses, but not need special education to benefit from the general education program.

## **A More In-Depth Look at... Adverse Effect**

The term “adverse effect” runs through virtually all of the special education eligibility categories (except for speech or language impairment and specific learning disability). The eligibility process requires, in part, that a child’s disability adversely affect his or her educational performance in order to qualify for special education services. IEP Teams must consider evidence certain areas of educational performance when determine the presence of adverse effect, and are guided by the state’s “Adverse Effect Form.” This Form is ultimately attached to the Written Notice for the IEP meeting at which eligibility is decided.

Maine’s Special Education Regulations define adverse effect as follows:

*The word “adverse” commonly means “harmful, impeding, obstructing, or detrimental.” To “adversely affect” means to have a negative impact that is more than a minor or transient hindrance, evidenced by findings and observations based on data sources and objective assessments with replicable results. An adverse effect on educational performance does not include a developmentally appropriate characteristic of age/grade peers in the general population.*

Please note that an adverse effect would be indicated by a child’s educational performance, either academic or functional, that is below average and worse than what we would expect from the child’s age or grade level peers.

## A More In-Depth Look at... Consultation Services

**Consultation services** are defined by Maine's Special Education Regulations as:

*Consultation may be provided to general education teachers of children with disabilities by special education teachers or speech/language clinicians or pathologists to assist them in modifying and/or adapting their general education curriculum to enable children to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and to appropriately advance toward achieving the goals set out in their IFSP/IEP. Consultation services shall be provided by an appropriately qualified special education professional employed or contracted by a School Administrative Unit.*

8  SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES (MUSER IX.3.A.(1)(d) & IX.3.A.(1)(g))				
Special Education Services	Position Responsible	Location	Frequency	Duration Beginning/End Date
Specially Designed Instruction				
Speech and Language Services				
Consultation				
Tutorial Instruction				
Extended School Year Services				
Related Services	Position Responsible	Location	Frequency	Duration Beginning/End Date
Speech and Language Services				
Occupational Therapy				
Physical Therapy				
Social Work Services				
Nursing Services				
Behavioral Health Day Treatment				
Transportation				
Other				

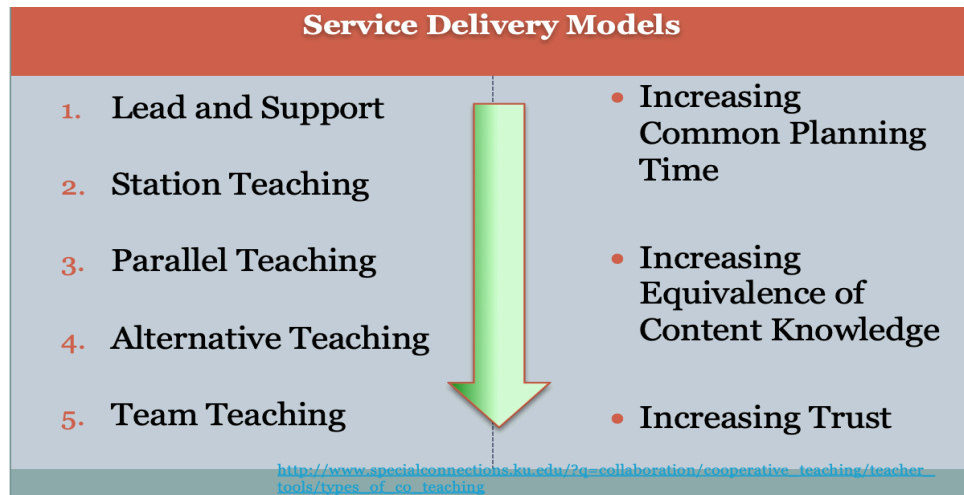
To put it more simply, consultation is the means by which a provider (special educator, service provider, etc.) can help other professionals support a student's attainment of his or her IEP goals and objectives. The focus of special educator consultation may be on appropriate strategies for instruction, behavior management, data collection, observation, and feedback in the general education setting. It is a type of service delivery that is best used to ensure a student has many chances during the day to use a particular skill. Consulting is as time consuming as direct service; good consulting will include observation of and interaction with a child in addition to communication between providers. Please note that consultation is provided to another educator, not to a student.

Example: A teacher for the visually impaired may consult with a classroom teacher about materials that are appropriate for a particular student's visual abilities and share strategies for working on scanning. Using these materials, the classroom teacher can have the student work on the skill of scanning in all classroom activities, not just when the teacher for the visually impaired is present.

## A More In-Depth Look at... Co-Teaching

Co-teaching is, according to educational consultant Anne Beninghof, a coordinated instructional practice in which two or more educators simultaneously work with a heterogeneous group of students (including students with disabilities) in a general education classroom. Co-teaching partners should have opportunities to plan together, share instructional responsibilities, and collaboratively reflect their practices, and should additionally be engaged for the entire instructional period.

There are five types of co-teaching, which reflect increasing levels of collaborative time, content knowledge, and trust amongst those involved:



Components of successful co-teaching relationships include:

- Active engagement of both teachers
- Both adults are viewed as “teachers” with equal authority
- Interactions between teachers show respect
- Teachers feel equally responsible for what happens in the classroom
- Teachers have time to plan lessons together and discuss issues
- Both teachers are aware of IEP goals and objectives
- Grading is shared
- Various grouping arrangements are used to facilitate learning



- Instructional strategies are utilized that enhance the learning of struggling students
- The instructional lead is shared, depending on the needs of the students
- Students with IEPs are included so that their participation is normalized
- Student assignments are differentiated if necessary

## **Benefits**

The many benefits of co-teaching for students include:

- –Students in co-taught classrooms outperformed students in other settings,
- Discipline referrals for students decrease after the institution of co-teaching,
- Student-student and student-teacher interactions increase,
- Students in co-taught classrooms cite enhanced performance, improved social skills, study skills, and improved classroom community,
- Opportunities for inclusion of special education students increase.

The many benefits of co-teaching for teachers include:

- Increased opportunities to connect with students,
- Increased abilities to differentiate instruction,
- Increased opportunities to collaborate with, and learn, peers,
- Increased opportunities to devise and implement instructional groupings,
- Increased supports for behavior and classroom management,
- Increased student achievement,
- Increased sharing of resources.

***–"Kaleidoscopes are the perfect metaphor for co-teaching. By turning the tube, an unlimited number of combinations occur to create unique designs. The possibilities are endless. So it is with co-teaching. When two adults work closely together to teach a heterogenous group of students, the classroom portrait will be unique and ever-changing, based on the students, the curriculum, and the strengths each person contributes to the picture."***

***-Anne Beninghof, Co-Teaching That Works***

## **A More In-Depth Look at... Special Education Paperwork**

Special educators are responsible for an inordinate amount of paperwork, which is mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Maine's Unified Special Education Regulations (MUSER). Meeting compliance expectations and upholding components of these laws are both essential responsibilities of a special educator. In the interests of sustainability, systems have been established to support special educators in these endeavors, such as the Adori electronic paperwork system or the case management model, but the degree of support generally depends on available resources. As such, all special educators may be responsible for creating and distributing documents including:

- Advanced Written Notices (AWNs)
- Class Grades
- Classroom Observations
- Data Collection (academic, behavioral, etc.)
- Incident Reports
- Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
- IEP Goal Progress Reports (by quarter or trimester)
- Non-Incident Reports
- Transition assessments
- Written Notices

# Understanding the Differences between IEPs and 504s

Some students with disabilities do not receive services under IDEA, but under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabling conditions by programs and activities receiving or benefiting from federal funding. Notably, Section 504 does not require the federal government to provide additional funding for students identified with disabilities even though schools must provide these child with reasonable accommodations to ensure they can access their regular education program.

The major differences between IEPs and 504 plans are found in the purpose of the provided supports, the eligibility processes and the specificity of associated procedures, the plan components, and the available funding, as summarized here:

Applicable Federal Law	
IEP	504
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973</li> </ul>
Purpose	
IEP	504
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for the purpose of ensuring the child can benefit from the general education program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure a child can access the general education program</li> </ul>
Eligibility	
IEP	504
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted population includes all children, ages 3 to 21</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted population includes all individuals, child and adult</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eligibility is determined by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing the presence of a disability that meets eligibility criteria in one of 15 categories</li> <li>Establishing that the disability adversely affects the child's educational performance</li> <li>Deciding that the child needs special education services in order to benefit from the regular</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eligibility is established by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determining if a child has a physical or mental impairment that <u>substantially limits</u> one or more major life activities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

education program.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation and placement decisions require parental consent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation requires parental consent.</li> <li>Decisions about the child, evaluation data, and plan options do not require parental consent, only parent notification.</li> </ul>
<b>Plans</b>	
<b>IEP</b>	<b>504</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An IEP is an individualized education program designed to meet a child's unique needs that includes the special education, related services, and/or accommodations necessary to ensure the child can <u>benefit from</u> the general education program.</li> <li>IEPs must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The child's present levels of academic and functional performance—how she is currently doing in school</li> <li>Annual education goals for the child and how the school will track her progress</li> <li>The services the child will get—this may include special education, related, supplementary and extended school year services</li> <li>The timing of services—when they start, how often they occur and how long they last</li> <li>Any accommodations or modifications</li> <li>How the child will participate in standardized tests</li> <li>How the child will be included in general education classes and school activities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A 504 plan is a program that specifies the accommodations necessary to ensure the child can equally <u>access</u> the general education program.</li> <li>504 plans should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific accommodations, supports or services for the child</li> <li>Names of who will provide each service</li> <li>Name of the person responsible for ensuring the plan is implemented</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legally binding, must be followed by all school personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legally binding, must be followed by all school personnel</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided at no cost to the parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided at no cost to the parents</li> </ul>

**\*\*Remember: Not every child with a disability requires specialized instruction.\*\***

## Special Education Programs in RSU 13

		School					
		APCS	CCS	South	TGS	OMS	OHS
Least Restrictive Environment	Program Description						
100% in Regular Classroom (6.5 hours)	Regular Education	X	X	X	X	X	X
	504	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Consultation Services	X	X	X	X	X	X
80% or more in Regular Classroom (>5.2 hours)	Resource Programs	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Speech Only	X	X	X	X	X	X
40% to 79% in Regular Classroom (2.6 - 5.1 hours)	Resource Programs	X	X	X	X	X	X
<40% in Regular Classroom (0-2.5 hours)	Self-contained Behavior Programs			*NECC (K-5) *Anchor (K-3) *Compass (4-5)	*Nautilus (K-5)	*Phoenix (6-8)	*North Star (9-12)
	Life Skills Programs				*Life Skills (K-5)	*Life Skills (6-8)	*Life Skills (9-12)
	NECC Programs					*NECC (5-8)	
Separate School/Homebound (0 hours)	Out of District (Spurwink, Pathways, Sweetser, Atlantic Academy, REAL School)						

\*\*X = Available in a Particular School

# Common Terms in Special Education

**Accommodation:** A change in the manner in which instruction and assessment are delivered that does not alter the curriculum level or expectation of what is being measured or taught.

**Adaptive Behavior Scale:** A measure that provides information relating to the attainment of skills that will lead to independent functioning as an adult.

**Advanced Written Notice:** The notice the school must provide parents in writing at least 7 days prior to the date of an IEP meeting at which the school proposes to initiate or change, or refuses to initiate or change, the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a child.

**Age of Majority:** All rights under IDEA part B and Maine's Unified Special Education Regulations transfer to the student at age 18. Students must be informed about their Age of Majority rights at or before the IEP meeting for the year the child will turn 17 years of age.

**Alternate Assessment:** An alternate assessment to Maine's required state assessments designed specifically for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The IEP team determines if this is appropriate for a particular student.

**Amendment:** A change to an existing IEP, such as increasing speech from 30 minutes to 45 minutes. An amendment is made to the plan after consultation with team members and begins upon an agreed upon date.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** The 1990 Federal legislation enacted to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability.

**Annual Goal:** A goal written in a student's IEP towards which the school personnel assists the student in striving to meet for the coming year. The goal must be measurable and relate to those areas in which the student has difficulty. Annual goals are reviewed once a year (at the student's annual review) and revised as needed.

**Annual Review:** A meeting conducted for every special education student each year. The IEP team convenes and reviews the student's progress on the IEP for the preceding year by reviewing the student's data, as well as revising the IEP to meet the student's needs for the upcoming school year. The meeting must be held no later than 364 days (one day less than a year) from either the last Annual Review or the original development of the IEP.

**Assistive Technology:** The special technology that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a physical, academic, or cognitive disability. Examples of assistive technology include things as simple as pencil grasps, computer programs such as

those that assist with reading and typing, programs that magnify the screen, phonic ear devices, special communication switches, and special keyboards. This technology does not limit itself to items used with a computer. Assistive technology determinations begin with low technology and move to higher technology only if needed.

**Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP):** A document (also called a Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP)) created for students who are experiencing behavioral difficulties. The document details the behavior of concern and the steps the special education teacher and school staff will take to help the student acquire more appropriate behaviors. A BIP is often created following the results of a Functional Behavioral Assessment, but can be developed any time a need is identified.

**Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA):** An individual with a graduate degree in the field of applied behavior analysis as well as appropriate certification provided by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board who is responsible for studying behaviors, assessing student behaviors, creating behavior plans, conducting functional behavioral assessments, and supporting staff in all environments in regards to their understanding of, and ability to address, behaviors.

**Cognitive/intellectual Assessment:** A test that measures a wide range of abilities, including attention, memory, problem solving, language skills and intellectual functioning. This test is part of the process of determining a student's cognitive strengths and weaknesses.

**Confidentiality:** A policy mandating that special education students' identifying information and educational information should be shared only with those school personnel who have an educational interest in that student for the current school year. Information about special education students or their parents will not be shared with those who are not educationally involved with the students.

**Educational Assessment:** A test that measures areas of knowledge or skills such as basic reading; reading comprehension; mathematics calculation, reasoning and application; written expression; oral expression; listening comprehension; and learning preference and style.

**Extended School Year (ESY):** A service required under IDEA for students who experience regression or limited recoupment of previously learned material. The school provides these services when it is likely that a child will lose skills during a break in school services and is not likely to recoup those skills in a reasonable amount of time. A child's performance data is used to show there are regression and recoupment problems and the decision to provide ESY services is made by the IEP Team.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):** A federal law protecting the privacy of students and families in the collection, maintenance, use, and destruction of educational records.

**Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE):** Public education provided at no cost to the parent, and in accordance with an Individual Education Program.

**Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA):** A school-based process used by the IEP Team to hypothesize why a child engages in challenging behaviors and how the behaviors relate to the child's environment. In an FBA, a series of observations and questionnaires are compiled into a report, the purpose of which is to determine the function of a student's inappropriate behavior and to devise means to reduce/replace/eliminate the behavior.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** A federal law requiring states to provide eligible children with disabilities a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP):** A document required by law for every student who receives special education. The program outlines the child's needs, abilities, and goals, as well as the special education services necessary to assist the child in meeting those goals. The IEP goals target the student's unique needs. No IEP is a guarantee of success; it is a good faith plan to improve performance.

**Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP):** A written document that describes the early intervention services for infants through toddlers (Birth-2 years of age) who have disabilities.

**Individualized Service Plan (ISP):** A plan similar to an IEP which outlines the services a district will make available to a student who is parentally placed in a private school or is home schooled (if requested).

**Intervention:** A method, strategy, material, or environmental change that is used by a regular education teacher to accommodate a struggling student in the general education program.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** A requirement that school districts educate students with disabilities in regular classrooms with their peers without disabilities and in the school they would attend if not disabled, to the maximum extent appropriate.

**Manifestation Determination:** An IEP Team directed process to determine if a student's specific behavior was or was not caused by the student's disability, and/or was or was not caused by the school's failure to implement the student's IEP.

**Mediation:** A process in which the parent(s) and guardian(s) of a student with a disability and a representative of the school district meet with a mediator, who is an independent person. By asking questions, and discussing all information with both parties, the mediator helps the parent(s) and the school district representative resolve disagreements, reach a more complete understanding of each other's concerns, and agree upon the special education program for the student in a cooperative and timely manner.



**Modification:** A change in the regular education curriculum and/or assessment that adjusts the standards of the curriculum (and the level of rigor) to meet the needs of the student. Modifications are made when the expectations are beyond the student's level of ability. Modifications may be minimal or very complex depending on the student's level of need. Example: Student may only be expected to learn ½ of the assigned spelling words.

**Occupational Therapy (OT):** A related service associated with the improvement of fine motor, sensory, and daily living skills that is provided to a student in order to allow him/her to benefit from his or her special education program.

**Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP):** The federal office responsible for administering programs and requirements under the IDEA.

**Physical Therapy (PT):** A related service associated with the improvement of gross motor skills and coordination that is provided to a student in order to allow him/her to benefit from his or her special education program.

**Present Levels of Academic, Functional, and Developmental Performance:** A statement on a child's IEP that summarizes the student's levels of academic achievement, functional performance, and, if appropriate, developmental performance. This information about the student can originate from: interaction with the student, teacher/parent anecdotal reports, classroom performance, and recent evaluations.

**Prior Written Notice:** A notice that must be provided to the parents in writing no more than 7 days after an IEP meeting. The written notice must, in understandable language, describe and explain school's proposed or refused action, describe the information used to make the decision, describe and explain other considered options, provide a summary of the parents' comments, include a statement about the parent's rights and available resources, and include a list of team members.

**Procedural Safeguards:** A summary of a parent's rights under special education law that must be offered to parents at least once every year by the School Department.

**Rating Scale:** A measure to provide information for comparing a student's targeted behavior(s) to other students. Developmental scales provide information related to areas of child growth and development and allow comparisons to be made between developmental levels of one student and others of the same age.

**Re-evaluation:** A process required by law to re-evaluate special education students in order to determine whether the student continues to be eligible for special education services and to determine the child's strengths and needs. The IEP team determines the components of the re-evaluation. A re-evaluation shall occur not more frequently than once a year, unless the

parent and school agree otherwise, and at least once every three years, unless the parent and school agree that a re-evaluation is unnecessary.

**Referral:** The initial step of the special education process. A teacher, parent, or other individual or agency representative with knowledge of the child may refer any student who needs, or is believed to need, special education or related services in order to receive a free and appropriate public education. Referrals for special education testing should be submitted to the school in writing, and parents or teachers making referrals should keep a copy of the written request.

**Related Service:** A service designed to support the delivery of special education direct instruction that is necessary for a child to achieve his or her special education goals. Examples of related services include speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and social work services.

**Resource Room:** A special education service location in which a student receives part-time special education instruction outside of the regular classroom. Resource room time can vary according to student need and is dependent on his/her individual needs.

**Response to Intervention (RTI):** A general education process designed to help all students at risk of academic and behavioral difficulties. It requires a multi-step process of providing intervention and supports to students who struggle to meet appropriate academic and behavioral benchmarks. RTI is a preventative measure that provides assistance to students early when they begin to struggle. It is a required part of the pre-referral process for many disability criteria.

**Short-term Objective:** A smaller, measurable step that assists students in meeting an overall annual goal. These objectives are required only for those students who are participating in the alternate assessment. Short-term objectives should be written in such a way that accurate and consistent measurement can be taken of the student's progress on the objective. The objective should also document criteria for what is considered successful accomplishment of the objective.

**Specially Designed Instruction (SDI):** A process of adapting, as appropriate, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the child with a disability to ensure the child has access to the general curriculum.

**Staffing:** An informal meeting in which the child's team may discuss concerns about a child. If the team feels a change needs to be made to the IEP, the IEP may be amended. A parent, or the school, may request a staffing at any time.

**State Educational Agency (SEA):** An agency in the state responsible for overseeing public education (i.e., Maine Department of Education).

**Supplementary Aid or Service:** An aid, service, or support provided in regular education classes that enables children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent possible.

**Transition:** A coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that is designed within an outcome oriented process, promotes movement from school to post-school activities, and is based on the student's needs. A transition plan is required in Maine beginning when the child is in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade or reaches the age of 16.

## Abbreviations in Special Education

Acronym	Explanation		Acronym	Explanation
<b>ABA</b>	Applied Behavior Analysis		<b>MDOE</b>	Maine Department of Education
<b>ADA</b>	Americans with Disabilities Act		<b>MEA</b>	Maine Educational Assessment
<b>ADD</b>	Attention Deficit Disorder		<b>MPF</b>	Maine Parent Federation
<b>ADHD</b>	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder		<b>MUSER</b>	Maine Unified Special Education Regulations
<b>ASD</b>	Autism Spectrum Disorder		<b>NAEP</b>	National Assessment of Educational Progress
<b>AT</b>	Assistive Technology		<b>NCLB</b>	No Child Left Behind
<b>AYP</b>	Adequate Yearly Progress		<b>OCD</b>	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
<b>BIP</b>	Behavior Intervention Plan		<b>OCR</b>	Office of Civil Rights
<b>CBM</b>	Curriculum-Based Measurement		<b>ODD</b>	Oppositional Defiant Disorder
<b>CCSS</b>	Common Core State Standards		<b>OHI</b>	Other Health Impairment
<b>DHHS</b>	Department of Health and Human Services		<b>OI</b>	Orthopedic Impairment
<b>DTT</b>	Discrete Trial Teaching		<b>OSEP</b>	Office of Special Education Programs
<b>ED</b>	Emotional Disturbance		<b>OSERS</b>	Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services
<b>ELL</b>	English Language Learner		<b>USDOE</b>	U.S. Department of Education
<b>ESY</b>	Extended School Year		<b>OT</b>	Occupational Therapy
<b>FAPE</b>	Free Appropriate Public Education		<b>PT</b>	Physical Therapy

<b>FBA</b>	Functional Behavioral Assessment		<b>RSU</b>	Regional School Unit
<b>FERPA</b>	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act		<b>RTI</b>	Response to Intervention
<b>IAES</b>	Interim Alternative Educational Setting		<b>SAD</b>	School Administrative District
<b>ID</b>	Intellectual Disability		<b>SAT</b>	Student Assistance Team
<b>IDEA</b>	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act		<b>SATs</b>	Scholastic Aptitude Tests
<b>IEE</b>	Independent Educational Evaluation		<b>SEA</b>	State Educational Agency
<b>IEP</b>	Individualized Education Program		<b>SLD</b>	Specific Learning Disability
<b>IQ</b>	Intelligence Quotient		<b>SNOW</b>	Strengths, Needs, Opportunities, and Worries (assessment)
<b>LEP</b>	Limited English Proficiency		<b>SSDI</b>	Social Security Disability Income
<b>LRE</b>	Least Restrictive Environment		<b>TBI</b>	Traumatic Brain Injury
<b>LREA</b>	Least Restrictive Educational Alternative		<b>TDD</b>	Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf
<b>MADSEC</b>	Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities		<b>VI</b>	Visual Impairment
<b>MD</b>	Multiple Disabilities		<b>VR</b>	Vocational Rehabilitation

## **Appendix A**

**[Special Education Referral Form](#)**

## **Appendix B**

**[IEP Meeting Teacher Input Form](#)**