

Minneapolis Public Schools

Special Education Resource Guide



MINNEAPOLIS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Created in collaboration with the Minneapolis Public Schools Special Education Advisory
Committee (SEAC)

Last revised: November 2022

Table of Contents

<u>Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)</u>	3
<u>Tips & Resources from SEAC</u>	4
<u>What is Special Education</u>	5
<u>Students Served</u>	6
<u>The Special Education Process</u>	7
<u>Special Education Terminology</u>	10
<u>IEP Components</u>	12
<u>Methods for Providing SPED Services</u>	13
<u>Related Services</u>	15
<u>Special Education Team Members</u>	16



Special Education Advisory Council

What is SEAC?

The Minneapolis Public Schools Special Education Advisory Council, SEAC (pronounced "seek") is a partnership between the school district and parents/guardians of Minneapolis students with disabilities. The SEAC is mandated by the state to advise the District on policy and planning through the Executive Director of Special Education.

SEAC comprises a majority of parents/guardians and Directors of the Special Education Department. The SEAC often invites leaders from other district departments in order to be informed and to lend perspective to decision-making.

Vision Statement

All children, regardless of their abilities, will achieve an academic, functional, and social education in the Minneapolis Public Schools from birth through transition to maximize their life choices and opportunities.

Mission Statement

- To increase the involvement and add the informed perspective of parents and families of children with disabilities in the making and implementation of district policies
- To identify and promote the common concerns of special education and non-special education students alike.
- To fulfill the requirements of Minnesota Statute 125A.24.

Get Involved

To get involved in Minneapolis Public Schools' SEAC, visit our website https://speced.mpls.k12.mn.us/advisory_council_2 or join the SEAC meeting on the first Thursday of each month.



Tips & Resources from SEAC

Below are some helpful tips and suggestions from caregivers of students who receive special education services within Minneapolis Public Schools.

- ❖ Keep all your child's records
- ❖ Maintain a paper trail when a crisis happens
- ❖ Share and update your at home crisis plan with your child's team
- ❖ Frequently communicate with your child's team when you notice a change in your child's behavior outside of the school day
- ❖ Trust your gut
- ❖ Advocate for your child
- ❖ Remember to take care of yourself
- ❖ If an expulsion is proposed, the IEP team must meet within ten school days of the removal of the student for the purpose of determining whether the student's behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability. Minn. Stat. §121A.43(d), and 20 U.S.C. § 1415(k)(1)(E).

Additional Resources

- ❖ [Hennepin County Human Services](#)
- ❖ [Minnesota Department of Education - Special Education Page](#)
- ❖ [MPS Application for Educational Benefits](#)
- ❖ [MPS SEAC Community Facebook Page](#)
- ❖ [MPS Special Education Advisory Council](#)
- ❖ [National Council on Disability](#)
- ❖ [Pacer Center](#)
- ❖ [U.S. Department of Education - Office of Special Education Programs](#)



What is Special Education?

Minneapolis Public Schools offers a wide range of Special Education programs and services. To receive special education services, a student must first be evaluated and meet state criteria. Once qualified, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed for the student. Programs and services are provided to students and their families beginning at birth through age 21 or completion of a secondary education program. Special education is also available for students who live in Minneapolis that attend nonpublic schools.

Mission Statement

The Minneapolis Public Schools Special Education department is relentlessly focused on students receiving individualized services and equitable instruction in their least restrictive environment. We are committed to educational evaluations and services that are not predicted by a student's race.

In Minnesota, school districts are required to serve eligible children from birth until the age of 21 or graduation from high school, whichever comes first. Services are provided by licensed personnel and include special teaching, materials, and techniques.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), special education is:

“Specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. Children who receive special education and related services are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). This includes opportunities to participate in the school's general curriculum and to make progress toward meeting annual goals. Children who receive special education must also have opportunities to take part in other typical school activities that are appropriate to their individual needs.”



Students Served

- ❖ To qualify for special education services, a student needs to be evaluated and meet eligibility criteria as outlined by the Minnesota Department of Education. In addition, the student needs to show that their disability impacts them in such a way that they have an educational need for special education services.

The recognized disabilities in Minnesota currently are:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Blind or Visually Impaired.
- Deaf and Blind.
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- Developmental Adaptive Physical Education.
- Developmental Cognitive Disability.
- Developmental Delay (ages birth through 6).
- Emotional or Behavioral Disorders.
- Other Health Disabilities.
- Physically Impaired.
- Severely Multiply Impaired.
- Specific Learning Disability.
- Speech Language Impairment.
- Traumatic Brain Injury.

- ❖ For more information about how Minneapolis Public Schools serves our students with special needs, please visit our website at <https://speced.mpls.k12.mn.us/>



The Special Education Process

My student is still having difficulty. What's next?

Unless a disability is clearly suspected, a special education evaluation will be implemented when students exhibit little to no progress in an area of concern, even after receiving interventions.

Early Intervention Process (birth to three)

Early Intervention (EI) is a Minneapolis Public Schools program for families with children ages birth to three years old. Early Intervention (0-3) provides support and instruction for young children at risk of having developmental delays or children identified with developmental delays or with a disability. Children and their families can receive services in their homes or childcare settings. Referrals can be made through Minnesota Help Me Grow <https://helpmegrowmn.org/HMG/Refer/index.html> or by calling 612-668-3715.

Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)

An IFSP is a document that includes information about your child, including a summary of their development in each area of development, goals you have for your child and family, and services provided to you and your child. Once your child's IFSP is written, you must sign the consent to begin services.

The Special Education Process

Step 1. Identification

There are two ways to identify a child as possibly needing special education and/or related services:

1. Child Find

Child Find is a process for identifying, locating, and evaluating children between the ages of 3 and 21 years within the district who may be eligible for special education or related services. The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process plays a vital role in supporting students in receiving the necessary support and interventions. MTSS is a school-wide



system and continuous improvement framework used to ensure positive social, emotional, behavioral, developmental, and academic outcomes for all students.

2. Referral from a parent/guardian or school personnel

A request for a Full Individual Evaluation must be submitted in writing to the principal or the case manager. The request should be signed, dated, and include an explanation of educational concerns and any supporting documentation. The school must provide the parent/guardian written notice of their decision within a reasonable amount of time (typically within two weeks) of receiving the request.

Step 2. Assessment Planning Process

If the school agrees to evaluate the student, an assessment planning meeting is scheduled within a reasonable amount of time (typically within two weeks) of receiving the request for an evaluation. The purpose of the meeting is to plan the evaluations needed to assess the child in all areas related to their suspected disability. Before the evaluation process can begin, the parent/guardian must provide written consent.

Step 3. Evaluations

For students in K-12, the initial evaluation must be completed, and the evaluation team must determine eligibility for special education and related services within 30-school-days after the date the parent/guardian provides written consent to conduct the assessments. For students birth to three, the initial referral process must be completed within 45-calendar-days after the district receives the referral.

Step 4. Eligibility Meeting

Before the 30th school day elapses, the IEP team (including the parent/guardian) meets to review the evaluation results and determine whether the student is eligible for special education and/or related services.

If the student is found eligible for special education, the team develops an Individualized Education Program (IEP).



If the student is not found eligible for special education, the school may consider eligibility under a Section 504 Plan.

Step 5. Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

The IEP team (including the parent/guardian) meets to develop the student's IEP. The IEP identifies the student's unique needs and describes how the school will address those needs. The IEP establishes goals and identifies the supplementary aids, supports, and services to allow the student to meet those goals.

The student's IEP is reviewed by the IEP team at least once per year.

For more information about what to do if you disagree with the IEP placement decision, visit [Parental Rights](#).

Step 6. Special Education and/or Related Services

Before the school may provide special education and related services to the student for the first time, the parent/guardian must provide written consent.

Special education and/or related services begin the school day after the school district receives the signature.

Step 7. IEP Progress Reports

The student's progress toward the annual goals is measured, as stated in the IEP.

IEP Progress Reports are provided as often as report cards to inform

parents/guardians about the student's progress toward the annual IEP goals.



Special Education Terminology

ABS	Academic and Behavioral Strategist
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ASL	American Sign Language
AT	Assistive Technology
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
BVI	Blind-Visually Impaired
CM	Case Manager
CST	Child Study Team
D/APE	Developmental Adapted Physical Education
DB	Deaf-Blind

DCD-MM	Developmental Cognitive Disability Mild to Moderate
DCD-SP	Developmental Cognitive Disability Severe/Profound
DD	Developmental Delay
DHH	Deaf and Hard of Hearing
EBD	Emotional Behavioral Disorders
ECSE	Early Childhood Special Education
EIP	Early Intervention Program
EL	English Learner
ESY	Extended School Year
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA	Functional Behavioral Assessment



Federal Setting	% of time student spends in Special Education I = 0-21% II = 21-60% III = 60% or more IV = separate special education site (50% or more of the day) V = hospital, day treatment, or facility
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IHP	Individualized Healthcare Plan
IFSP	Individual Family Service Plan
LEA	Local Education Agency
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Support
OT	Occupational Therapy
PCA	Personal Care Assistant

PI	Physically Impaired
PLAAFP	Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
PT	Physical Therapy
SEA	Special Education Assistant
SEAC	Special Education Advisory Council
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SLP	Speech-Language Pathologist
SMI	Severe Multiple Impairment
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
TSES	Total Special Education System

For more information on frequently used abbreviations and terms click [here](#).

Additionally, a complete list of acronyms used in Special Education visit:

<https://education.mn.gov/mde/dse/sped/049966>



IEP Components

IEP Participants

This section includes all participants who contribute to the IEP process

Present Levels, Needs, Annual Goals, Objectives

The team discusses present levels of performance and identify goals and objectives to support the student’s progress

Secondary Transition

Transition services are discussed before or during the student’s 9th grade year

Transportation

The team discusses the necessary transportation services including specialized transportation options

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

A BIP is created if the student has an IEP goal focused on the student’s need for emotional self-regulation and/or challenging behavior

State and District Testing

The team discusses the accommodation options for state and district testing offered to the student

Special Education, Related & Supplemental Services

In this section, a student’s special education services are discussed as well as accommodations, adaptations, and modifications to support the student in their LRE.

Federal Setting & Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

The federal setting is identified and the LRE is determined for the student to make adequate academic and social emotional progress

Extended School Year (ESY)

ESY service options are discussed and determined if the student qualifies for ESY

Additional IEP Elements

In this section, the length of the student’s school day and the frequency the caregivers are provided progress reports will be determined



Methods for Providing SPED Services

MPS provides a full continuum of educational service alternatives. All students with disabilities eligible for special education services are provided the special instruction and services that are appropriate to meet their identified educational needs. Set out below are descriptions of MPS: (A) methods of providing special education services for identified students, (B) available sites at which services may be provided, and (C) special education and related services available.

A student's current level of performance, special education and related service needs, and special education goals and objectives are identified in a student's individual education program. Appropriate special education and related services to meet these special education needs, goals, and objectives are determined on an individual basis. Program alternatives are comprised of the types of services provided, the setting in which services occur, and the amount of time and frequency in which the services are delivered. A student may receive special education and related services in more than one program based on the student's Individual Education Program (IEP) (ages 3 to 21), or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)(ages birth through age 3).

A. Methods of providing special education and related services in MPS for identified special education students:

- ❖ Early childhood services delivered in the home, in a center-based program, or at an MPS or community early childhood site
- ❖ Instruction by general education teachers in a general education classroom with modifications, accommodations, supplemental services, and indirect services by special education staff
- ❖ Direct instruction services in a small group special education resource classroom
- ❖ One-on-one instruction



- ❖ Co-teaching instruction by general education and special education teachers
- ❖ Services in small structured special education classrooms with high staff-to-student ratios
- ❖ Homebound and home-based instructional services
- ❖ Instruction and other services in a highly structured environment in a separate special education site
- ❖ Transition services provided at an MPS high school or in a separate special education site, including community-based vocational training programs and work-based learning programs
- ❖ Instruction and other services at MPS locations for students needing special education services who attend non-public schools located in the City of Minneapolis, including home schooled students.

B. Alternative sites are available in MPS where special education and related services may occur. Visit <https://speced.mpls.k12.mn.us/> for more information.



Related Services

Related Services are defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) as “transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.” The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) provides information and resources to assist related service personnel to meet the needs of students receiving special education services

C. Available special education and related services:

- ❖ Physical Therapy
- ❖ Occupational Therapy
- ❖ Speech services
- ❖ Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) & Audiology services
- ❖ Blind/Vision Impaired (BVI) services
- ❖ School social work services
- ❖ School psychology services
- ❖ Assistive technology
- ❖ Developmental Adaptive Physical Education (DAPE) services
- ❖ Special Transportation for students who live within MPS district boundaries.
- ❖ Music Therapy



Special Education Team Members

When a child receives special education services within Minneapolis Public Schools, IEP team meetings will include the following participants. Depending on your student's individual needs this list may vary.

- ❖ Student
- ❖ Caregiver(s)
- ❖ General Education Teacher
- ❖ Special Education Teacher (Case Manager)
- ❖ District Representative (Administrative Designee)
- ❖ School Psychologist
- ❖ Related Services (if needed)
- ❖ Caregiver/Student Advocates
- ❖ Community Advocate (PACER or outside agency)
- ❖ Additional support staff
- ❖ Nurse
- ❖ Counselor
- ❖ Interpreters (if applicable)
- ❖ Work coordinator

