

RESOURCES (continued)

The Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN)

(800) 331-0688

www.fcsn.org

The Disability Law Center

(800) 872-9992

www.dlc-ma.org

Massachusetts Advocates for Children

Helpline: (617) 357-8431, ext. 3224

www.massadvocates.org

Wrightslaw

Wrightslaw is a leading website about

Special Education law and advocacy.

www.wrightslaw.com

These services / organizations are resources for you to explore.
They have not been endorsed by MCS. You may suggest
additional resources or send comments on these listings to
info@mcsnet.org

1000 Wilbraham Road
Springfield, MA 01109



Special Education



Educating students with special needs in
a way that addresses their individual
differences and needs.

Springfield Family Support Center
1000 Wilbraham Road
Springfield MA 01109
Tel : 413-782-2500

Holyoke Family Support Center
260 Westfield Road
Holyoke MA 01040
Tel: 413-534-3299

MCS SOS of Springfield
505 E. Columbus Avenue
Springfield MA 01105
Tel: 413-301-7390

Westfield Office
3 State Street
Westfield MA 01085
Tel: 413-562-4885

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Special Education is specially designed instruction and related services that are put into place to ensure that students with disabilities make effective progress and develop his/her individual potential.

Students with disabilities are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (**FAPE**) in the least restrictive environment (**LRE**) as defined by Federal Law Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (**IDEA**).

Who is eligible for Special Education services?

Children ages 3-21 with a defined disability who are unable to learn the general education program without special education or related services due to his/her disability are eligible for these services.

The Individualized Education Program (IEP)

According to state and federal special education laws, all children who have been found eligible for special education must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP is a written plan that describes exactly what special educational services and accommodations your child will receive. It must be reviewed every year. Each child's IEP is developed by a team of people at the school and includes the parent as part of the IEP Team.

What is a 504 Plan?

A 504 Plan helps a child with accommodation needs to fully participate in school. Usually, a 504 Plan is used by a general education student who is **not** eligible for special education services. A 504 Plan lists accommodations related to the child's disability and required by the child so that he or she may participate in the general classroom setting and educational programs.

Who is a part of the "TEAM"?

IDEA states that each TEAM must include the child's parent/guardian, at least one special education teacher and/or provider, at least one regular education teacher (if the child is participating in the regular education environment), a person to interpret and explain the evaluation results, the child (if aged 14-22) and any other person or agency that has special expertise about the child.

The Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA)

The Bureau conducts mediations, advisory opinions and due process hearings to resolve disputes among parents, school districts, and private schools. They are conducted by impartial mediators and hearing officers who do not have personal or professional interests that would conflict with their objectivity in the proceeding. A school district may not request a hearing on a parent's failure or refusal to consent to initial evaluation or initial placement of a child in a special education program or to written revocation of parental consent for further receipt of special education and related services.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

The school committee of a city, town, or school district must, by law, establish a parent advisory council on special education. Membership is available to all parents of children with disabilities and other interested parties. The parent advisory council duties include advising the school committee on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities; meeting regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school committee's special education programs.

Program Quality Assurance (PQA)

Implements the Department's compliance monitoring and complaint management procedures for school districts, charter schools, educational collaborative, and approved public and private day and residential special education schools and provides technical assistance to school personnel and the public regarding the implementation of laws and regulations.

RESOURCES

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) – Special Education

75 Pleasant Street

Malden, MA 02148

(781) 338-3375

www.doe.mass.edu/sped