



What Everyone Needs to Know About... Special Education and Related Services

When a group of education professionals, in collaboration with the parents, has determined that the unique learning needs of a student require special education services and programs, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed. The IDEA is clear that students are to be educated in the regular education setting as much as possible. When it does become necessary to provide instruction in a specialized setting, the IEP team holds the responsibility to identify the specialized instruction and services needed to support the student's intellectual and functional development.

What IDEA & MARSE Say

The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA) and [Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education](#) (MARSE) are the foundation of special education accountability requirements in MI.

300.39 Special education

Special education means [specially designed instruction](#) to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. This includes instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings; and instruction in [physical education](#). Special education also includes each of the following: [Speech-language pathology services](#) and other related service, if the service is considered special education rather than a related service under State standards; [Travel training](#), and [vocational education](#).

300.34 Related services

Related services means [transportation](#) and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes [speech-language pathology](#) and [audiology services](#), [interpreting services](#), [psychological services](#), [physical](#) and [occupational therapy](#), [recreation](#), including [therapeutic recreation](#), [early identification and assessment](#) of disabilities in children, [counseling services](#), including [rehabilitation counseling](#), [orientation and mobility services](#), and [medical services](#) for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. Related services also include [school health services and school nurse services](#), [social work services](#) in schools, and [parent counseling and training](#).

Special Education Supports Learning and Achievement

Frequently referred to a “programs and services,” the provision of special education and related services is not limited to a designated physical location such as a classroom or building. However, programmatic support, such as specialized classrooms or schools, and discipline specific support, such as school social work or occupational therapy, typically compete with instruction in the regular education setting and are considered more restrictive than supplementary aids and services.

IEP teams need to be thoughtful when considering [removal from regular classes](#). Special classes, separate schooling and other removal from regular instruction should occur only when education in regular classes cannot be achieved satisfactorily with supplementary aids and services.

IEP teams must assure that all of the specialized supports identified in the IEP align with the student's disability related needs, annual IEP goals and post school aspirations.

Related regulation, rule and guidance

[Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA 2004)

PACER - [Related Services](#)

[Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education](#) (MARSE)

CPIR - [Related Services](#)

[OS Resources – Special Education & Related Services](#)

CPIR - [Related Services: Common Supports for Students w/ Disabilities](#)

NOTE: While the content of this page reflects general aspects of the law regarding students with disabilities as of the date of its creation, it is not intended to constitute or serve as legal advice for any particular student scenario. Schools should consult legal counsel for advice with regard to specific situations