

FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE)

FAPE and Age Ranges

- The school district must provide special education and related services to all resident school-age children with disabilities. "School-age children" are children who have reached five years of age but have not yet reached 21 years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year.
- An otherwise eligible person whose 21st birthday occurs during the school year is eligible for FAPE for the remainder of the school year.
- The requirements of this rule also apply to children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school.

Age Limitations and Exceptions to FAPE

- The district must admit an otherwise eligible student who has not yet reached 21 years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year.
- A student who receives a regular high school diploma is no longer entitled to FAPE. A regular education diploma does not include an alternative degree that is not fully aligned with the state's academic standards, such as a certificate or general educational development credential (GED).
- If the school district chooses to provide special education to a student with a regular high school diploma, that student remains eligible for FAPE.
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CHILD FIND

Child Find Process

There is an ongoing process to locate, identify and evaluate **all** children residing within the school district boundaries who are suspected of being disabled and in need of special education services; including:

- Highly mobile children with disabilities (such as migrant and homeless youth)
- Children who are wards of the state;
- Indian preschool children who reside on reservations;
- Children who are suspected of having a disability even though they are advancing from grade to grade;
- Children enrolled in public charter schools;
- Children who are home schooled;
- Children below the age of compulsory school attendance who are not enrolled in a public or private program; and
- Children above the age of compulsory school attendance who, have not graduated with a regular high school diploma.
- Children who are attending private schools.

Special Education/Child Find Activities Include:

- A close working relationship with Early Childhood Special Education, Department of Human Services, Jefferson County Juvenile Department and Mental Health.
- School Parent/Student handbooks include information about Special Services to inform parents.

- Child Find posters are placed in key locations in the community including: grocery stores, library, banks, post office and doctor's offices, the hospital, in all schools and other community agencies.
- The Child Find notice is published in the local newspaper.
- Each school in the district has a Student Intervention Team (SIT) of specialists who meet regularly to discuss academic and/or behavioral concerns.
- Consultation meetings with private schools located within the district's boundaries occur annually, if there are private schools within the school district boundaries.

Child Find Screenings

To assist in the identification process of children in the general school population who are suspected of having a disability, several screenings are used:

- Hearing Screening

Annual hearing screenings are conducted for students in kindergarten, new students in grades K-3, and by referral. Students in other grades may be screened by parent or teacher request. Students who do not pass will be re-screened. If the student does not pass the second screening, parents are notified and a request made for parents to consult with their child's physician and/or a hearing specialist.

- Height, Weight and Vision Screening

Height, weight, and vision screenings are conducted annually for each student in kindergarten through fifth grades. If a student does not pass the initial vision screening, the student is re-screened. If the student does not pass the second screening, parents are notified and a request made for parents to consult with a vision specialist.

- Scoliosis Screening

Scoliosis screenings are conducted in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. After the screening, parents are notified when there is a concern.

- Speech and Language Screening

All students in kindergarten are screened in the areas of speech and language. Students in other grades may be screened by parent or teacher request. A parent or teacher may also refer a student to the Student Intervention Team (SIT) if there is a concern in the area of speech and/or language.

Intervention Teams

When concerns are expressed by parents, teachers, or other interested parties, the school district will address those concerns through a school based Student Intervention Team (SIT). The SIT may consist, but is not limited to, parent(s)/guardian(s), building administrator, a regular education teacher, school counselor, speech language pathologist, special education teacher and school psychologist. The purpose of the SIT is to appropriately address concerns. Concerns may be addressed through strategies to be implemented with the classroom, curricular and/or behavioral interventions, and/or assessments to ascertain additional information including a comprehensive evaluation to determine if the child may be a child with a disability.

1. Student Intervention Team (SIT)
 - a. To initiate the SIT team process, the referring person must complete the **district SIT referral form** and collect all data, including:
 1. Standardized testing

2. Attendance
3. Outcome data of Strategies/Interventions
4. Outcome data of Curriculum Based Measures

NOTE: The referring person must notify the parent of the referral to the Student Intervention Team (SIT).

2. The Student Intervention Team (SIT) is a school based team with the purpose being to appropriately address student concerns. Concerns may be addressed through strategies to be implemented with the classroom, curricular and/or behavioral interventions, and/or assessments to ascertain additional information. When the team suspects a disability, a referral is forwarded to a CORE team of specialists.
3.
 - Student Intervention Team (SIT) participants include:
 - Required:** Counselor, principal, special education teacher, Title IA teacher, classroom teacher, speech language pathologist, and school psychologist
 - Invited:** English Language Learner specialists, the student's previous teacher, behavior specialist, others as needed
3. Data Collection – Data collection should reflect frequent monitoring of a student's progress toward specified goals. Curriculum Based Measures (CBM) must be used to assess the student's growth toward academic and/or behavioral goals. Goals selected should reflect those of typically developing peers.

Request For Special Education Evaluation:

A parent or Student Intervention Team (SIT) may initiate a request for a comprehensive evaluation to determine if a child is a child with a disability by submitting a **Referral for Special Education** form to the SIT facilitator.

Early Intervention

Local school districts are responsible for the process of child find for children ages 0-3 years of age. The Early Intervention programs in collaboration with the Jefferson County ESD have a process in place to address referrals for Early Intervention services.

ECSE Transition

Transition from ECSE to School-age Special Education Services:

Before a child reaches the age of eligibility for public school, the district must:

- For children previously eligible with a developmental delay and suspected of having a disability, conduct an evaluation and determine eligibility for school age special education services; or
- For children previously eligible in a disability category, continue the child's eligibility for school age special education services. The school district may conduct a reevaluation and reconsider eligibility for special education services.

The school district and the ECSE program must hold a meeting during the year before the child is eligible to enter public school:

- To determine steps to support the child's transition from ECSE to public schooling or other educational setting; and
- For a child eligible for school age special education services, to develop an IEP that is in effect at the beginning of the school year.

Home School Student Referrals

Students who are eligible for special education whose parents elect to instruct them at home are registered through the Jefferson County Education Service District. Parents are required to notify the JCESD of their intent to home school. If the student is eligible for special education services, the district is required to offer a Free Appropriate Public Education. If the student is suspected of having a disability and is not currently receiving special education services, it is the school district's responsibility to evaluate and determine if the child is a child with a disability. The referral for special education for a home school student is made to personnel at the JCESD .

Private School Student Referrals

The Special Education Director meets annually with each of the private schools located within the district's boundaries to consult and describe child find activities, these activities occur only if there is an operational private school within the school district boundaries. Child find includes evaluations, eligibility determinations and reevaluations. The child find process for parentally placed private school children is designed to:

- Ensure the equitable participation of parentally placed private school children;
- Provide an accurate count of students with disabilities;
- To be similar and completed within a comparable time period to the child find activities for those attending public school.