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Cooperative School Services
Parent Handbook

Believing in the worth and dignity of every person, Cooperative School Services, in partnership with our nine school corporations, strives to enable all students to reach their potential through the provision of quality special education services.

Serving
Benton Community
Frontier
Kankakee Valley
North Newton
North White
Rensselaer Central
South Newton
Tri-County
West Central

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INTRODUCTION

All member districts of the cooperative provide a full continuum of special education services for our students. Special education includes specially designed instruction to meet a student's unique educational needs and related services to support a student's educational program. The services range from support for students placed in general education classroom settings to self-contained, specialized programs for students whose educational needs require more intensive services and support.

The compliance manual provides pertinent information regarding the specific procedures and supports within the Cooperative School Services available to assist staff and students. Cooperative School Services in partnership with the nine school corporations holds high standards and expectations regarding service delivery and compliance with special education law (Article 7). The cornerstone of both federal and state law is that each student with a disability is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). This means that special education and related services are to be provided to students with disabilities at no cost to the parent, in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP) that complies with federal and state requirements, in the least restrictive environment (LRE) and in such a manner that provides the student with equal opportunity to participate in services and activities that are available to all students. Special education and related services must be provided in an environment that least restricts the student's opportunity to interact with non-disabled peers. LRE is often explained as two distinct, yet clearly related concepts: the actual setting in which a student with a disability receives special education and related services and a philosophy that a student with a disability should, to the maximum extent appropriate for that student, be educated with his or her non-disabled peers.

DEFINITIONS

Alternate Diploma: The Indiana Alternate Diploma can be earned through the completion of 40 high school credits, applied units, or a combination of both.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP): A Behavior Intervention Plan is defined by Article 7 as a plan agreed upon by the case conference committee and incorporated into a student's individualized education program, that describes how the student's environment will be altered, identifies positive behavioral intervention strategies, and specifies which skills will be taught in an effort to change a specific pattern of behavior of the student. The plan shall be linked to information gathered through functional behavioral assessment. To ensure transference, the behavioral intervention plan seeks to maximize consistency of implementation across people and settings in which the student is involved.

Case Conference Committee (CCC): The Case Conference Committee (CCC) is the only group that can make decisions regarding the eligibility and placement in special education for a student with disabilities. This committee, composed of persons representing a variety of perspectives regarding the student's needs, helps to ensure that decisions made for each student are appropriate. The Case Conference Committee (CCC) is bound by the rules and regulations governing special education services for students with disabilities. All determinations pertinent to eligibility, needs for special education, and the nature of the student's program must be made within established criteria of federal, state, and local policy.

Certificate of Completion (COC): A Certificate of Completion is a locally developed certificate that encourages equity (course of study that mirrors a diploma) and allows flexibility through the credits or units for accessing both the Academic Standards and Alternate Achievement Standards and is determined by the Case Conference Committee (CCC).

Continuum of Services: Cooperative School Services in partnership with the nine school corporations makes special education and related services available to students from age 3 through 21 and offers a full continuum of placement options for students with special needs, as deemed appropriate by the Case Conference Committee.

Early Childhood Services: The program begins serving identified children on their third birthday until they become kindergarten age. This program has community classrooms, developmental classrooms, and communication skills classrooms. Students in the community placements have relatively little need and are typically identified as having minimal communication needs and/or are developmentally delayed. Children in the developmental classroom have a higher level of need for continuous support by special education staff and are working on readiness skills, socially appropriate behaviors, managing behaviors, and/or communication needs. Students in the communication skills classroom have an intense level of need and are provided very specific training to develop communication skills and appropriate behaviors so they can begin to function in the educational environment. Early Childhood also offers speech-only services.

Early Childhood Special Education Services: The Case Conference Committee (CCC) determines how many hours per day and how many days per week of instructional time, as well as any related services, the student needs. The choice of placement options for early childhood special education programs includes:

- Community programs designed primarily for students with disabilities;
- Programs designed primarily for students with disabilities that are located in a general education or community setting;
- Home-based services; and
- Separate facilities.

Education Scholarship Account (ESA): "ESA account" refers to an Indiana education scholarship account established by an eligible student's parent or an emancipated eligible student.

Educational Scholarship Account Service Plan (ESA Service Plan): The written document offered by the public agency, rejected by the parent, and serves as the basis for the special education and related services for which scholarship money in the account may be used.

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA): Article 7 defines Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) as a process that uses data to identify patterns in the student's behavior and the purpose or function of the behavior for the student. In addition, Article 7 specifies that a Functional Behavioral Assessment must be completed:

1. When the behavior of a student in special education is interfering with the learning of self or others
2. When the student is being considered for eligibility for special education due to behavior or emotional concerns
3. To develop a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
4. When a student is suspended for ten or more days.
5. When a student is placed in an interim alternative educational setting
6. When a student is recommended for expulsion
7. When the school initiates a removal that constitutes a change of placement

Inclusion Support: Students identified with special needs are supported by special education staff in the general education classroom.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A written document for a student who is eligible for special education and related services by a case conference committee.

Manifestation Determination (MD): If the student's behavior/misconduct is a manifestation of the student's disability, discipline cannot be imposed. In making this determination, the Case Conference Committee (CCC) considers whether the student's behavior/misconduct was:

- Caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability, or
- The direct result of the school's failure to implement the student's IEP.

Related Services: Transportation, developmental, corrective, and other supportive services that are required for a student to benefit from special education. (See Article 7, Rule 43, 511 IAC 7-32-79)

Removal: Any time school personnel unilaterally remove a student from his/her placement, it is considered a "removal". A student may be removed for up to 10 days before educational services must be provided. Educational services must be provided for the 11th cumulative day of removal and beyond.

- Removal for part of a day counts as a day of removal *unless* it is part of the student's IEP or BIP.
- Any removal is considered a suspension, and suspension procedures must be followed

Section 504 Procedures: Section 504 is a civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in all programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. The focus of Section 504 is on the eligible student with a disability having equal access and equal benefit to the school's programs and activities as compared with his nondisabled peers.

Transition Individualized Education Program (TIEP): The Case Conference Committee (CCC) must develop a Transition IEP that will be in effect when the student: 1) enters into grade 9; or 2) becomes fourteen (14) years of age; whichever occurs first, or earlier if determined by Case Conference Committee (CCC).

Teacher of Record (TOR): Teacher of record refers to the single special education teacher to whom a student with a disability is assigned.

Teacher of Service (TOS): Teacher of service means any teacher providing services to a student with a disability.

Transition into Early Childhood Special Education: If the student has been participating in an early intervention program, such as First Steps, there is to be a "transition planning conference" prior to the student's third birthday. The school is required to participate in this conference as long as the parents agree to the school's participation.

By the student's third birthday, the school must have:

- Completed the evaluation of the student;
- Convened the Case Conference Committee (CCC) to determine the student's eligibility for special education services;
- Developed an IEP (if the student is determined eligible); and
- Begun implementing the student's IEP.

If the student's third birthday occurs during the summer, services must be provided during the summer if the student's IEP requires extended school year services. Otherwise, the IEP should indicate that services will start at the beginning of the school year and no extended school year services are necessary.

CHILD FIND

Child Find is the process for locating, identifying, and evaluating individuals with suspected disabilities who may need special education services, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. All member districts of the cooperative provide a Free Appropriate Public Education to any child who qualifies as having a disability, in accordance with federal and state laws. All schools are responsible for locating all children ages 3, but less than 22 years of age with a suspected disability who reside within the boundaries of our district. With early identification and intervention, frustration and academic failure can be prevented, in turn, creating a positive learning experience for students.

Child Find is a state and local effort to find children, ages 3-21, who are not receiving a free public education and who may have disabilities that interfere with learning. Child Find also seeks to create a greater awareness of the special needs of these children. The Child Find process is used to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities who are in need of special education and related services who reside within the school corporation's boundaries or attend a private school within the school corporation's boundaries.

This process of referral of students to Special Education through Cooperative School Services in partnership with the nine school corporations occurs as a possible outcome of one of two processes: *the individual school corporation's RTI process and/or the Article 7 referral process outlined in the Indiana state guidelines*. The RTI System uses problem-solving teams to initiate and track interventions targeting difficulties experienced by individual students. A primary focus of the problem-solving teams in the RTI process is the identification of interventions for the student and progress monitoring to guide the content and intensity of interventions. Referral to Special Education using the RTI process will occur only if it is evident that the student has not responded to interventions implemented with fidelity and appropriately targeted the student's difficulty. Referral to Special Education using the Article 7 process occurs when an educational staff or a parent makes the initial referral using the stated procedural steps after general education interventions occur.

Cooperative School Services, in partnership with the nine school corporations, is also responsible for conducting Child Find activities and evaluations necessary for private schools located in the cooperative. IDEA and USDOE Regulations require school districts to identify and provide select services to students with disabilities at private schools in the jurisdiction, regardless of the student's home residence.

Child Find for Non-public School Students

If a student attends a Non-Public school located within partner school boundaries, Cooperative School Services and that student's home school (based on boundaries and location of the non-public school) are responsible for Child Find activities for that student regardless of where the student resides. Therefore, Cooperative School Services and the student's home school must conduct Child Find in all private schools, including parochial and elementary and secondary schools located within partner school boundaries. An offer of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) can only be provided via an IEP by the school district in which the student resides.

If a student resides within a partner school boundaries but attends a Non-Public school outside of the school district, Cooperative School Services and the student's home school are responsible for assessing (or otherwise responding) if and when there is an assessment request to determine whether the student is eligible for special education and related services. If the student qualifies and FAPE is accepted, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed. If the child qualifies, but FAPE is rejected, then a Service Plan (SP) is

developed. Any services outlined in a Service Plan for home-schooled students are provided at the student's boundary school.

When a Case Conference Committee (CCC) determines a student is eligible for and in need of special education services, the committee will provide information to the parent about Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). If the parent rejects the offering of FAPE, school personnel may develop a Service Plan (SP) that outlines the services that will be provided to the student. All service times given to students home-schooled or in Non-Public schools cannot exceed service times required by FAPE.

Homeschool Services

If a parent/guardian has elected to **home-school** a student who **lives within a partner school boundary,** the boundary school Teacher of Record would be responsible for Service Plan (SP) implementation. Per Article 7, if a student is eligible for special education and receives related services, these are available to home-school students via a Service Plan (SP). Service plans are not offered to preschool-aged students whose parents choose to home-school.

If the student is enrolled, the boundary school will complete withdrawal procedures at the school level.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA '04), and Article 7 generally require the school to obtain parental consent before disclosing or releasing personally identifiable information from the student's educational record. However, there are also a number of situations in which the school may release certain information about a student without obtaining written parental consent. In situations where the school may disclose information without consent, school personnel must make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent(s)/student of legal age with a copy of the information that was disclosed.

The parent(s) and students of legal age have the right to inspect and review the educational record. When the parent(s)/student of legal age make a request to inspect and review the record, the school must provide access to the record:

- Without unnecessary delay;
- Before any meeting regarding an IEP, interim alternative educational setting (IAES), or manifestation determination;
- Before a resolution session or any due process hearing; and
- Within 45 calendar days of the request.

In addition to looking at the student's record, the parent(s)/student of legal age also have the right to:

- Have information interpreted or explained by school personnel,
- Have alternative arrangements or a copy of the record made if the originals would prevent the parent(s) from being able to inspect and review the record,
- Have a representative inspect & review the record on behalf of the parent(s) or student of legal age, &
- Receive a copy of the record for use in a pending due process hearing.

REMINDER: If the student's parents are divorced, the non-custodial parent has the right to access the student's educational record as long as the school has not received a court order terminating or restricting the parent's authority to access the student's educational record.

EDUCATIONAL SURROGATE

The School must assign an educational surrogate parent when:

- No parent, as defined in 511 IAC 7-32-70, can be identified.
- After reasonable efforts, the school cannot locate a parent.
- The student is a ward of the state under the laws of the state unless the court order creating the wardship permits the student to remain in the home or expressly reserves to a parent the authority to make decisions regarding the student's education or upbringing.
- The student is a ward of the Department of Correction who has a parent.
- The student is a homeless student who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

The school must ensure that a person assigned as an educational surrogate parent:

- is not employed by the Department of Education (DOE), a public agency, or any other agency involved in the education or care of the student;
- has no personal or professional interest that conflicts with the interests of the student whom the educational surrogate parent represents;
- matches the student's cultural and linguistic background to the extent possible; and
- has knowledge and skills that ensure adequate representation of the student.

An educational surrogate parent's representation of a student includes the following:

- Participating in case conferences or other parent-teacher conferences.
- Granting or denying written consent for evaluation or services.
- Accessing and reviewing the student's educational record.
- Requesting mediation, a due process hearing, or filing a complaint.
- Exercising on behalf of the student any other rights that a parent may exercise under this article.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

Article 7 provides **procedural safeguards** for the parent(s) and students that are designed to promote parental participation, ensure that students with disabilities are provided a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), and provide a means of resolving disagreements. Procedural safeguards have been referred to as the "rights and responsibilities" of the parent(s) and schools.

The school must provide the parent(s) a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards* at least once a year and whenever:

- A student is referred for an initial evaluation
- A parent requests an evaluation
- A parent files a complaint (only the first complaint in the school year is required),
- A parent requests a due process hearing (only with the first hearing request in the school year),
- A disciplinary change of placement is made or recommended
- A parent requests a copy of the *Notice*, and
- At the annual case conference review.

English Procedural Safeguards	Arabic Procedural Safeguards	Burmese Procedural Safeguards
French Procedural Safeguards	German Procedural Safeguards	Japanese Procedural Safeguards
Mandarin Procedural Safeguards	Punjabi Procedural Safeguards	Russian Procedural Safeguard
Spanish Procedural Safeguards		

AGE OF MAJORITY/TRANSFER OF RIGHTS

At eighteen (18) years of age, under state law, all rights transfer to the student unless the parents attained guardianship. This means that the student is afforded the right to make the educational decisions that had been previously made by the parent or guardian.

Beginning no later than the student's seventeenth (17th) birthday, the parents must be informed about this transfer of rights. The IEP must include a statement that the parent has been informed of their rights under IDEA and Article 7, if any, that will transfer to the student. This information can be put in the Conference Notes section of Transition or in the General Notes. An example would be as follows:

If a student with a disability has reached age 18 and has not been determined to be incompetent by the courts, but is determined not to have the ability to provide informed consent, the school district shall follow the state procedures for appointing an appropriate individual to represent the educational interests of the child. All rights of youth incarcerated in adult or juvenile federal, state, or local correctional institutions transfer to the child.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Referrals from teachers, parents, and a variety of other sources may lead to the identification of students who may need special education services. Once a referral is made: (1) A data meeting will be conducted with the appropriate staff, (2) If an assessment is deemed necessary, consent will be obtained, and (3) when consent is received, a comprehensive individual assessment will be conducted. The purpose of the assessment is to determine: (1) if a physical, mental, or emotional disability exists; (2) if a significant educational deficit exists; and (3) the student's specific learning competencies and strengths and weaknesses.

If a student is determined eligible for and requires special education services, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed by the Case Conference Committee (CCC) which includes parents and school representatives. The IEP outlines the special education instructional and related services a student is to receive. The plan is reviewed at least annually.

Timelines

The Notice of Initial Evaluation and Notice of Reevaluation must be provided to the parent within 10 school days of the date the school receives the parent's request for an evaluation. The written notice before an initial

Case Conference Committee (CCC) meeting must be received by the parent at least five (5) school days before the initial Case Conference Committee (CCC) meeting.

The school needs written parental consent (your agreement) **before** your child is evaluated for the first time and **before** the school can provide special education and related services for the first time. Parental consent is also required before the school reevaluates your child, unless the school can demonstrate that it has taken reasonable steps to obtain your consent, but you have failed to respond.

The initial evaluation must be conducted and the Case Conference Committee (CCC) convened within **50** school days of the date the school receives your written consent.

An "expedited evaluation" means that the public agency conducts the evaluation and convenes the Case Conference Committee (CCC) within twenty (20) instructional days from the date of the parent's written consent for the evaluation if a referral is made for an initial educational evaluation of a student during the time period in which the student is subjected to: (1) suspension; (2) expulsion; or (3) placement in an interim alternative educational setting; the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without educational services.

EL Referrals to Special Education

The following are guidelines regarding the referral of EL students for Special Education:

1. It is recommended that the child be in the school system for more than a full academic year before a referral to special education is justified except when prior knowledge of a disability is available or a disability is obviously apparent.
2. A referral to special education should only happen after all other avenues have been explored to ensure that a Special Education referral for a student is handled appropriately. Upon completion of this process, if you conclude that the child's needs cannot be met by the regular education program and that the student's needs are **not related** to second or other language learning, the referral process may proceed. ***Note: A student must not be determined eligible for special education services if the determinant factor is limited English proficiency.***
3. When evaluating students with limited English proficiency for special education, the assessments and other evaluation tools must be administered in the student's native language or other modes of communication and English to provide evidence that the difficulties are present in both languages.

Move-in Under Evaluation Process

If a student moves into a Cooperative School Services partner school from outside of the cooperative districts and it is reported that an evaluation was in process at the previous school, then the school psychologist/ educational diagnostician will contact the previous school to determine if academic/behavior data has been gathered and if the evaluation has been started and/or finished. Then a request would be made for that school to send the completed information. If evaluation was completed then the school will hold a case conference committee meeting to review those results and determine eligibility. If the evaluation was not completed, then the school psychologist/educational diagnostician may need to request an educational evaluation. That evaluation would be completed within 50 instructional school days from the time signed consent is received.

If a student moves from one school district to another district within Cooperative School Services, then the school psychologist/educational diagnostician will proceed with the evaluation under the current timeline.

Evaluations Completed by Outside Agencies

Parents may choose to have their child evaluated by an outside agency. When a school receives an outside evaluation report, the Case Conference Committee will consider the outside evaluation at a Case Conference.

Reevaluation

Once a student is identified as having special education services, including speech, any other evaluation for the student is considered a reevaluation

Reevaluations

A reevaluation is any evaluation other than an initial evaluation, including the evaluation of a student for a different area of eligibility, related service, or FBA. Special Education law states the purpose of evaluation is to determine eligibility for special education services and/or to provide information to guide services and programming decisions. **Referrals to evaluate solely to attain an IQ or to "update" information should not be processed. TORs must consult with the assigned school psychologist when considering a request for reevaluation.**

Students already receiving special education services do not need full reevaluations every three years as required in the past. Committees have a wealth of data on students (ILEARN, Grades, AIMS web, NWEA, Progress monitoring data, etc.). If the committee has questions about services or eligibility, an evaluation team member can be consulted without a full evaluation request.

Reevaluation Considerations: Different or Additional Eligibility Categories

A request for a re-evaluation must include the original eligibility area(s) as a component of the re-evaluation and make student-specific decisions about what evaluation data is needed to consider: (1) the addition of any eligibility area(s); and (2) the removal of the existing category(ies). The rationale for all eligibility decisions, including both additions and removals of eligibility categories, should be thoroughly documented in the eligibility section of the individualized education program (IEP) under "Describe the reasons for eligibility determination including the other options considered and reasons these options were rejected" and Case Conference Committee (CCC) notes.

Case Conference Determination of Request for Reevaluation

The need for reevaluation is to be considered and documented in the notes section at each ACR, but reevaluation testing does not need to be completed unless the Case Conference Committee (CCC) determines that additional information is necessary to:

- Determine the student's eligibility under a new or different exceptionality area, or
- Inform the Case Conference Committee (CCC) of a student's special education or related service needs (OT, PT, FBA, etc.)
- Dismiss from special education services.

  - The Case Conference Committee (CCC) reviews existing present levels of performance including evaluations; information provided by the parent(s); current classroom-based, local, or state assessments; classroom-based observations, observations by teachers and related service providers; and other relevant information to determine if additional reevaluation information is needed.

Re-evaluation timeline for students identified as Developmental Delay

For students currently identified as a student with a Developmental Delay (DD), a re-evaluation must be completed prior to the 9th birthday.

Students turning 18 after the request for reevaluation but before reevaluation testing is completed

If the student turns 18 after the request for reevaluation but before testing actually occurs, the student may have to provide written consent prior to the test.

The student also has the right to decline the testing at that time, regardless of the parent's written consent, as long as the parents have not obtained formal guardianship of the student and no education representative has been assigned.
If no guardian or educational representative has been appointed, the evaluator needs to discuss this with the student and obtain the student's consent before proceeding with the evaluation.

Independent Educational Evaluation

Request for an independent educational evaluation (IEE): When a parent disagrees with the results of an evaluation conducted by the school, the parent may make a verbal or written request for an IEE.
Only one IEE per school evaluation: A parent is entitled to only one IEE at public expense each time the school conducts an evaluation.

IEE Report: The school is entitled to a copy of the evaluation report from the independent evaluator, and the results must be considered by the case conference committee.

Revoke Parental Consent for Evaluation

Parents have the right to revoke consent for an educational evaluation prior to the completion of the evaluation. In order to rescind consent, the parent must provide a signed, written statement stating the desire to withdraw consent for an educational evaluation. The school should inform the parent of their right to request an evaluation at a later time and inform parents this would start a new referral. If the school recommended the referral, discuss it with parents and document the reason for the initial referral request. The parent's written statement and any other documentation should be uploaded to IIEP. Previous interventions implemented as part of a 504 plan, Rtl and/or PBIS should continue as deemed necessary to meet the student's needs.

Initial Case Conference and Determining Eligibility

Upon completion of the initial evaluation, the case conference is convened to share the evaluation results and determine if the student meets eligibility criteria, as defined by Article 7. The case conference committee must not determine that a student is eligible for special education and related services if the determinant factor is due to exclusion factors (i.e., lack of appropriate instruction, limited English Proficiency, and/or the student does not otherwise meet the eligibility criteria). Cooperative School Services School Psychologists utilize eligibility checklists, based on Article 7 criteria, to help case conference committees determine eligibility. For students referred to consider eligibility under Specific Learning Disability (SLD), the Multidisciplinary Team will need to complete the additional SLD certification form.

During an Initial case conference, if the student is determined eligible, the case conference committee must determine the special education and related services necessary to meet the educational needs of the student. The case conference committee must consider all evaluative data when determining eligibility, including:

- Assessment reports
- Teacher observations and recommendations
- Parent input
- All other pertinent information, including but not limited to, any medical documentation and outside evaluation results. Note: if any evaluation from an outside agency was considered as part of the case conference, the IEP, including the note section, must specify the components of the evaluation and recommendations considered.

Parent signature on the Notice of Initial Proposed IEP must be attained to either provide consent for special education services to be provided or to refuse consent for special education services. If the parent is not prepared to provide written consent at the end of the case conference, a copy of the finalized IEP should be provided within 10 days. Parents must provide consent in order to provide services proposed in the IEP. In the event the parents are not responsive or refuse to provide consent, the school should document all attempts to obtain parental consent for services.

When a case conference committee determines the student is not eligible for special education services, the parents should be provided the Notice of Ineligibility. The case conference committee may consider referring the student to the building 504 coordinator for further exploration of alternative interventions, if appropriate.

ELIGIBILITY CATEGORIES

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Definition: a lifelong developmental disability that includes autistic disorder as described in the current version of the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). The disability is generally evident before three years of age and significantly affects verbal, nonverbal, or pragmatic communication and social interaction skills and results in an adverse effect on the student's educational performance.

Blind Low Vision (BLV)

Definition: A disability that even with best correction affects the student's ability to use vision for learning, which adversely affects the student's educational performance, includes a reduced ability or a complete inability to utilize the visual system to acquire information; and may include or be limited to a reduction in field of vision.

Intellectual Disability (ID)

Definition: is manifested during the developmental period; is characterized by significant limitations in cognitive functioning; is demonstrated through limitations in adaptive behavior; and adversely affects educational performance.

Mild Intellectual Disability (MI): falls 2 standard deviations below mean (70-55); and manifests delays in adaptive behavior consistent with the mild cognitive disability

Moderate Intellectual Disability (MO): falls 3 standard deviations below mean (55-40) and manifests delays in adaptive behavior consistent with the moderate cognitive disability
Severe Intellectual Disability (SD): falls 4 or more standard deviation below mean (<40) and manifests delays in adaptive behavior consistent with severe cognitive disability

Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)

Definition: referred to as a hearing impairment that means; a disability that with or without amplification adversely affects the student's ability to use hearing for developing language and learning; educational performance; and developmental progress; The hearing loss may be permanent or fluctuating, mild to profound, unilateral or bilateral; students may use spoken language, sign language or combination of spoken language and signed systems.

Deaf-blind (DB)

Definition: "Deaf-blind", which may be referred to as dual sensory impaired, means a disability that: (1) is a concomitant hearing and vision loss or reduction in functional hearing and vision capacity; (2) causes significant communication and adaptive behavior deficits; (3) adversely affects the student's educational performance; and (4) cannot be accommodated for by the use of a program or service designed solely for students who are: (A) deaf or hard of hearing; or (B) blind or have low vision.

Developmental Delay (DD)

Definition: solely a category for students who are at least three (3) years of age and less than nine (9) years of age. A developmental delay of either 2 standard deviations below the mean (70) in one of the following developmental areas or one and one-half standard deviations below the mean (78) in any of the two following developmental areas: gross or fine motor development; cognitive development; receptive or expressive language development; social or emotional development; self-help or adaptive development;

Emotional Disability (ED)

Definition: an inability to learn or progress that cannot be explained by cognitive, sensory, or health factors. Student exhibits one or more of the following characteristics:

- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems;
- A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression;
- An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships;
- Inappropriate behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances;
- Episodes of psychosis

Language or Speech Impairment (LI/SI)

Definition: A language or speech impairment is characterized by one of the following impairments that adversely affects the student's educational performance: Language impairments in the comprehension or expression of spoken or written language resulting from organic or nonorganic causes that are non-maturational in nature. Language impairments affect the student's primary language systems, in one or more of the following components: Word retrieval, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics, and Pragmatics. Speech impairments that may include fluency, articulation, and voice disorders in the student's speaking behavior in more than one speaking task that are non-maturational in nature, including impairments that are the result of a deficiency of structure and function of the oral peripheral mechanism.

Multiple Disabilities (MD)

Definition: "Multiple disabilities" means coexisting disabilities, one of which must be a significant intellectual disability. The coexisting disabilities are lifelong and interfere with independent functioning, and it is difficult to determine which disability most adversely affects educational performance. The term does not include deaf-blind.

Orthopedic Impairment (OI)

Definition: a severe physically disabling condition that adversely affects educational performance; may include impairments caused by any of the following: congenital anomaly, diseases such as poliomyelitis or bone tuberculosis, or other causes such as cerebral palsy, amputations, fractures, burns that cause contractures.

Other Health Impairment (OHI)

Definition: Health problems that result in medications, treatments, therapies, frequent doctor's appointments, and repeated hospitalizations can affect a student's ability to learn and function at school. Health problems may significantly impact academic, behavioral, social, or emotional functioning. A student with such a condition may be considered for special education services under the category of Other Health Impairment (OHI).

Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

Definition: a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that adversely affects the student's educational performance; manifested itself when the student does not achieve adequately for the student's age or to meet state approved grade level standards in one or more of the following areas: Reading, Written Expression, Math, Oral Expression, Listening Comprehension and can be evidenced through either insufficient progress to meet age or state approved grade level standards in one or more areas (reading, math, written expression) when using a process on the student response to scientific, research-based intervention or a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance or achievement or both relative to age, state-approved grade level standards or intellectual development.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Definition: is an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a student's educational performance. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more of the following: cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem-solving, sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities, psychosocial behavior, physical functions, information processing, and speech. TBI does not include congenital or degenerative or induced by birth trauma.

CASE CONFERENCE PROCEDURES

The Case Conference Committee (CCC) is the only group that can make decisions regarding the eligibility and placement in special education for a student with disabilities. This committee, composed of persons representing a variety of perspectives regarding the student's needs, helps to ensure that decisions made for each student are appropriate. The Case Conference Committee (CCC) is bound by the rules and regulations governing special education services for students with disabilities. All determinations pertinent to eligibility, needs for special education, and the nature of the student's program must be made within established criteria of federal, state, and local policy.

A case conference committee must convene in the following circumstances:

- Within the timeline (50 or 20 days depending on the referral) after an initial evaluation is conducted
- After the student has been reevaluated
- Periodically, but not less than annually, for a student previously determined eligible for education
- Within 10 instructional days of the enrollment date of a student who has been receiving special education in another state or another district within the state
- Within 10 instructional days of a disciplinary change of placement to determine whether the student's behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability
- At least every 60 instructional days when the setting in which the student is receiving educational services is the student's homebound due to behaviors.

Required Case Conference Committee Participants:

- Public agency representative/PAR (e.g. principal, speech-language pathologist, administrator of local home district, special education teacher)
- A teacher licensed in the area of the student's suspected disability and/or speech and language pathologist
- General Education teacher
- Psychologist or Educational Diagnostician (must be invited to initial case conference to review evaluation results)
- Occupational or Physical Therapist (if the student is receiving related services)
- Parents(s)/Guardian(s)
- Student (if of transition age—age 14 and up with parent permission)
- Student - if 18 or above

Parent attendance/participation in Case Conference Committee (CCC) meetings:

After repeated, documented attempts to contact the parent, the committee can hold a scheduled conference without the parent.

ALTERNATE DIPLOMA

The Indiana Alternate Diploma can be earned through the completion of 40 high school credits, applied units, or a combination of both. Students must complete one activity aligned with their transition goals and develop a transition portfolio that demonstrates their work experience, credentials, or work certificates from high school.

Required credits/units such as English/Language Arts, social studies, mathematics, science, health, physical education, and employability are also identified.
This diploma is intended for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities for whom a Case Conference Committee (CCC) has determined that the Indiana Alternate Diploma is appropriate, as indicated in the student's IEP, and has participated in the statewide alternate assessment program, I AM.
Receipt of an alternate diploma does not end a student's eligibility to continue to receive special education and related services. The student would continue to be eligible to receive a free appropriate public education through the school year in which the student becomes 22.

An LEA may award a locally developed certificate, such as a **certificate of completion**, to a student who does not meet the graduation requirements for a regular diploma or an alternate diploma. A **certificate of completion** is not an Indiana recognized academic credential.

Indiana Alternate Diploma
Course of Study

The Course of Study for the Alternate Diploma is a framework for aligning curriculum to grade level standards while meeting the individual goals and transition needs stated in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Minimum total 40 credits/applied units: It is expected that these requirements are met through enrollment in a combination of general education courses for credit, modified general education courses in which non-credit applied units are earned and special education courses in which non-credit applied units are earned.

English/Language Arts	**8 credits/applied units** Including a balance of literature, composition, vocabulary, speech/communication
Mathematics	**4 credits/applied units** Including a balance of number sense, expressions, computation, data analysis, statistics, probability, equations and inequalities and personal finance. Student must take a math or applied math course each year in high school.
Science	**4 credits/applied units** Including a balance of physical, earth/nature, life, engineering, and technology
Social Studies	**4 credits/applied units** Including a balance of history, civics, government, geography, economics
Physical Education	**2 credits/applied units**
Health and Wellness	**1 credit/applied unit**
Employability	**10 credits/applied units**

	Job exploration, work- or project-based learning experiences, employability skills (mindsets, self-management, learning strategies, social, workplace), portfolio creation, intro to post-secondary options Investigation into opportunities for enrollment in postsecondary programs, workplace readiness training to develop employability and independent living skills, and instruction in self-advocacy
Electives	**7 credits/applied units**

Alternate Diploma Transition Portfolio
Students earning an Alternate Diploma fulfill <u>at least one</u> of the following (aligned with transition goals): Career Credential: Complete an industry-recognized certification, one-year certificate or state-approved alternative Career Experience: Complete project-or work-based learning experience or part-time employment Work Ethic Certificate: Earn a Work Ethic Certificate criteria to be locally determined) Other Work Related Activities: As determined by the case conference committee

Mirrors regular diploma requirements (minimum 40 applied units or credits with emphasis on academics)
Employability Skills are an integral part of the plan
A transition portfolio is a requirement
Can be earned through any combination of applied units and credits
Aligned with Statewide Assessment (I AM)

RELATED SERVICES

Related Services are for children ages 3-21 years and are defined as developmental, corrective, or other supportive service that are provided to help a student benefit from his/her special education program. Related services include services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, behavioral consultation, and special transportation. **Before a student can receive related services, a student must first be eligible for special education and must also demonstrate a significant deficit in skills that would in turn affect their school performance.** Common related services include (see Article 7 for an exhaustive list of related services):

- **Assistive Technology**: any item or piece of equipment acquired to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. Such devices can be as simple as pencil grips and magnifiers, or as complex as voice output devices and computer access software.
- **Occupational/Physical Therapy**: These services support the development of educationally relevant skills in the areas of fine and gross motor, self-care, and mobility. The OT/PTs use an integrated service model that may include direct, or indirect, consultation, technical assistance, or observation depending on the student's needs. *REMINDER: Before a student can receive PT, the student is required (by law) to have a signed Physician's Order for Physical Therapy.*
- **School Counseling**: This related service emphasizes the development of social, behavioral, and/or learning skills to enable the student to benefit from instruction.

DISCIPLINE

A school does not have to provide services to a student who is eligible for special education during the first 10 days of removal.

What is a Removal?

- Removal for any part of a day constitutes a day of removal
- A suspension is a removal
- Suspension from the bus is a removal if transportation is part of IEP, unless the school arranges alternate transportation

What is Not a Removal?

- A short-term removal pursuant to IEP is not a removal.
- An in-school suspension is not a removal if the student has the opportunity to:
    - Progress appropriately in the general curriculum;
    - Receive special education services specified in the IEP; and
    - Participates with non-disabled students to the extent the student would have in the student's current placement.

Manifestation Determination

Manifestation Determination is a process to determine if a student's behavior problem **was or was not** a manifestation of the student's disability. A Manifestation Determination is completed as part of an IEP team meeting.