



SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT HANDBOOK



**Bay-Arenac ISD
Special Education
4228 Two Mile Road
Bay City, MI 48706-2324**

989.667.3215

www.baisd.net/services/specialed/services/

HOW TO OBTAIN SERVICES

If you think your child might qualify for Special Education services, call your school district. The number for the director or supervisor for Special Education programs and services in your district is listed below:

Public School Districts

Arenac Eastern	989.867.4234
Au Gres-Sims	989.876.7150
Bangor Township	989.684.8121
Bay City Public	989.686.9700
Essexville-Hampton	989.894.9700
Pinconning Area	989.879.4556
Standish-Sterling	989.846.3670

Public School Academies

Bay City Academy	989.414.8335
State Street Academy	989.684.6484
Bay-Arenac Community High School	989.893.8811

Information in this handbook applies to students age three through twenty-five. Support for Children age birth to three can be accessed through Early Childhood.

Bay-Arenac ISD
Early Childhood
989.667.3263 ext. 4000

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This handbook is written as a reference to acquaint you with Bay-Arenac ISD's special education programs and services. It describes the special education process, as well as parent and student rights. It illustrates the steps taken to plan and provide your child's special education program. It also explains and defines the terms used during the process. You can use this handbook as a guide to help you understand special education procedures.

State and federal laws provide that all children, including those with disabilities, have a right to a free, appropriate public education. Special education includes classroom programs and other types of services that are designed especially for those with various types of disabilities or impairments. Rules based on these laws define each type of impairment, specify how each type must be evaluated, and state what type of service is to be available. The impairment must affect school performance to the degree that special education programs and/or services are deemed necessary. In Michigan, special education services must be provided to eligible students from birth through age 25, or until graduation from high school. The *Revised Administrative Rules for Special Education* state that each student is to be provided services in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), wherever the student will receive the most appropriate education.

We hope you will find the information in this handbook helpful, although your individual concerns and interests may vary depending on the age and the nature or severity of your child's disability. For additional information you can contact your local school district or the Bay-Arenac ISD, Special Education Department.

Sincerely,

Bay-Arenac ISD
Special Education Department



Office of Special Education

www.michigan.gov/ose-eis



**Michigan Special Education
Information Line**

1-888-320-8384

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WHAT IS SPECIAL EDUCATION?

Special Education is specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability.

WHY DOES MY CHILD NEED AN EVALUATION?

An evaluation helps answers these questions:

- Does the child have the characteristics of a disability or specific disability?
- How is the child currently performing in school?
- What are the child's educational needs?
- Does the child need Special Education and related services?
- What additions or modifications, if any, are needed to enable the child to meet annual goals in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum?

WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS?

Before a child is evaluated for the first time, the school must notify the parent and describe any evaluation the school proposes to conduct. The parent must give informed consent for the child to be evaluated. The process involves gathering and reviewing existing information on the child by an IEP Team. This includes consideration of current classroom assessments, observations, and information provided by parents and school staff.

HOW IS A CHILD EVALUATED FOR THE PRESENCE OF A DISABILITY?

The testing is done individually in the child's native language. Standardized tests must be used correctly and fairly and be administered by trained, knowledgeable personnel.

WHO DECIDES IF A CHILD IS ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES?

After the evaluation has been completed, the IEP Team, consisting of qualified professionals, the parent and the child whenever appropriate, will decide if the child is eligible for Special Education service(s).

WHO IS A “CHILD WITH A DISABILITY?”

Any child age birth through age 25 who has not graduated with a regular high school diploma and, as the result of a comprehensive evaluation;

- Has the characteristics of a specific disability as defined in the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education. (See the Special Education categories listed on page 11 of this book.) and
- Needs Special Education and related services because of that disability.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A CHILD/ STUDENT IS FOUND ELIGIBLE?

Another role of the IEP Team is to develop the student’s program or Individualized Education Program (IEP) As stated earlier, the IEP Team is comprised of the parents, school professionals, and the student, whenever appropriate. After the IEP is developed, the student begins to receive Special Education and related services as described in the IEP Team report.

WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)?

An “Individualized Education Program” means a written plan for a student with a disability that spells out the Special Education and related services the student will receive. The IEP is developed at a meeting that is scheduled at a mutually agreeable time. The written document is a record of the IEP Team meeting. The IEP is reviewed and revised at least once a year.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE IEP?

The requirements include:

- A statement of the student’s Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
- A statement of measurable annual goals and short-term objectives that address:
 - How to help the student be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum (or appropriate activities, for preschool children)
 - How the student’s progress toward the annual goals will be measured, and
 - How the parents will be regularly informed of that progress

- A statement of how Special Education programs/services and supplementary aids will be provided to the student, and any accommodation, modifications or other supports for the school personnel
- The starting date for services as well as the duration, anticipated frequency, and location of where programs and services will be delivered
- An explanation of the student’s Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- A statement of any accommodations the student will need to take the state - and/or district-wide assessment.
- A statement of transition services no later than the first IEP that is to be in effect when a student is 16. This may be considered in an IEP at age 13.

Minor changes to a current IEP are made through an addendum. Minor changes include, but are not limited to:

1. Adding, modifying, or deleting instructional goals and objectives
2. Modifying the amount of time in the current program
3. Adding, modifying or deleting related services or provisions related to supplementing aids/services assessment, or transportation.

WHAT IS LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)?

LRE looks at the setting in which the student receives an education. The law presumes that students with disabilities are most appropriately educated with their same-aged, non-disabled peers in the general education setting.

Attending special classes or separate schools, or removing students with disabilities from the general education classroom occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability prevents the student from achieving satisfactory progress even when supplementary aids and services are used.

WHAT IS A “FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION” (FAPE)?

FAPE means that education and related services are provided at

public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge. The services provided must meet the standards of the Department of Education for all students and be designed to meet the student's IEP goals and short-term objectives.

HOW DOES A PARENT PARTICIPATE IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

Parents are encouraged to be meaningfully involved by providing input about their child in a variety of ways:

- Parents are equal members in decision-making meetings such as meetings that determine the identification, evaluation, educational placement, reporting of progress toward goals, Review of Existing Educational Data (REED), and the appropriate education of the student.
- Parents give consent for initial evaluations and initial placements.

CAN THE STUDENT BE INVOLVED IN THE IEP?

Students often provide valuable insights regarding their strengths and needs. When they are involved in determining their own goals and objectives, they are more committed to achieving them. When appropriate, each student has the option to be a part of the IEP Team process. Students can participate in their own annual transition planning by age 16, or younger as appropriate. Students who are age 17 are notified that their rights will be transferred to them upon reaching the age of majority (18). At age 18 both the student and parents are notified that the rights are transferred to the student, unless other legal decisions have been made.

WHAT ARE PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS?

They are legal safeguards that protect the rights of students with disabilities and their parents. They provide the information that parents need to make decisions about their student's education. They explain the procedures used to resolve disagreements between parties. The Procedural Safeguards are from state rules and federal regulations. Sometimes they are difficult to understand. If you have any questions regarding them, please contact Bay-Arenac ISD, your local school district, or sources listed in this handbook. The Procedural Safeguards can be found at: www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/May09-ProceduralSafeguardsNotice_278611_7.pdf

WHAT TRANSPORTATION SERVICE DOES A DISTRICT PROVIDE FOR STUDENTS WITH AN IEP?

The same transportation services available to general education students are available to students with IEPs. In addition, specialized transportation services are provided by school districts if the IEP Team determines that the student needs those services to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The school district's responsibilities related to transportation include furnishing any specialized services documented on a student's IEP (such as a lift bus or safety harness) and following appropriate safety, medical, and traffic rules and procedures.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO TRANSPORTATION OF MY CHILD WITH AN IEP?

It is important for parents/guardians to read transportation policies and procedures provided by their district or transportation office and to discuss those policies with your son/daughter, when possible. Besides reinforcing safety rules, it is the responsibility of parents to assist their child to the bus if he/she cannot travel independently between the residence and the bus due to physical problems, immature development, or inaccessibility of the residence. Teamwork, communication, and cooperation between parents and schools are important in achieving safe transportation of students.

WHAT IF I HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT MY CHILD'S SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES?

For most students and families, standard home-school communication methods such as progress reports, daily logs, e-mail, phone calls, IEP meetings and conferences provide ample and effective opportunity to address concerns that may arise. In some instances, however, other strategies may be necessary. You may choose to contact your teachers or ancillary staff in writing or by email if you believe your child needs different or additional services and supports. A parent can, at any time, request an IEP Meeting using a dated letter or email. In this instance, send an additional copy of your request to someone else on your IEP Team or in your district. Explain in detail the purpose for convening the IEP meeting. There is no requirement to wait for the scheduled annual review.

If you still have a concern or need to bring additional attention

to your concern, contacting the Special Education Supervisor or Director for your district or the school principal by phone, email, or dated written letter. You may also choose to contact Bay-Arenac ISD (ISD for all schools in Bay and Arenac Counties) for guidance or assistance. This can be done through the website (<http://www.baisd.net>), by phone (989.667.3276), by email or in writing. Services from Bay-Arenac ISD are free and can be very helpful.

For those occasions when a more prescribed means of addressing a concern might be needed, there are several options for families. You may choose to request a facilitated IEP Team meeting using a dated letter, email or a phone call. The trained facilitators are neutral and this service is free to families. A second option is to request the use of a local resolution process through a dated letter, email or phone call. Resolution processes are also free to families. A third option would be to request mediation using a dated letter, email or phone call. This process is free and a signed mediation agreement is enforceable in court.

RESOLUTION SESSION

The purpose of a resolution session is for parents to discuss their concerns with district staff so that the parties have an opportunity to resolve the dispute. The district shall convene a meeting with the parents and the relevant member(s) of the IEP Team who have specific knowledge of the facts identified in the complaint. The meeting shall: (1) occur within 15 calendar days of receiving notice of the parent's complaint; (2) include a representative of the agency who has decision-making authority on behalf of the agency; (3) not include an attorney of the district unless the parent is accompanied by an attorney; (4) be a meeting where the parents of the child discuss their complaint.

WHAT FORMAL WAYS EXIST TO RESOLVE DISPUTES OR MAKE A COMPLAINT?

Dispute resolution is available whenever a dispute arises with respect to Special Education. It includes, but is not limited to mediation, state complaint, due process complaint, and as part of the due process complaint procedures, a resolution session.

MEDIATION (page 10 of the MDE Procedural Safeguards Notice)
The MDE has established procedures to make mediation available to allow you and the school district to resolve disagreements including matters arising prior to the filing of a state complaint or a due

process complaint. Thus, mediation is available to resolve disputes whether or not you have filed a due process complaint to request a due process hearing.

STATE COMPLAINTS and DUE PROCESS COMPLAINTS

(page 12 of the MDE Procedural Safeguards Notice) There are separate procedures for State complaints and for due process complaints and hearings. Any individual or organization may file a State complaint alleging a violation the requirement of IDEA by a school district, the MDE, or any other public agency. Only a parent or a school district may file a due process complaint on any matter relating to a proposal or a refusal to initiate or change the identification, evaluation or educational placement of a child with a disability, or the provision of a FAPE to the child. Staff of the MDE generally must resolve a State complaint within a 60 calendar day timeline, unless the timeline is properly extended. An Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) must hear a due process complaint (if not resolved through a resolution meeting or through mediation) and issue a written decision within 45-calendar days after the end of the resolution period (described on page 16 of the MDE Procedural Safeguards Notice), the ALJ may grant a specific extension of the timeline at your request or the school district's request. The State complaint and due process complaint, resolution and hearing procedures are described more fully in the MDE Procedural Safeguards Notice.

SCHOOL-BASED MEDICAID

Medically necessary services already provided by schools may be billed under the school-based Medicaid Program. Enrollment by a school district for billing to Medicaid is not expected to result in any change in your child's program or services elsewhere. Districts are responsible for obtaining parent consent prior to initiating billing the Medicaid school-based program.

POLICY AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION (Title II, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504)

The District Board of Education complies with all federal, state and local statutes and laws prohibiting discrimination and retaliation and expressly prohibits unlawful discrimination or unlawful retaliation in any form. Specifically, Bay-Arenac ISD provides equal employment opportunity and treatment regardless of race, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, disability, height, weight, or any other orientation status protected by federal, state or local law.

Grievance Procedure: If any person believes the Bay-Arenac ISD or any part of the school organization is in some way discriminating on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, handicap or disability, height, weight, marital status or any other status protected by federal, state or local law, in providing instructional opportunities, job placement assistance, employment practices, policies governing student conduct and attendance, or in any other services provided by the Bay-Arenac ISD, he/she may bring forward a complaint which shall be referred to as a grievance, to the Bay-Arenac ISD Civil Rights Coordinator at the following address: Director of Human Resources, Civil Rights Coordinator, Bay-Arenac ISD, 4228 Two Mile Road, Bay City, MI 48706, 989-667-3201.

SPECIAL EDUCATION DISABILITY AREAS

Each district must provide or contract for appropriate Special Education programs and/or services for students identified as having:

- **Autism Spectrum Disorder**
- **Cognitive Impairment**
- **Deaf-Blindness**
- **Early Childhood Developmental Delay**
- **Emotional Impairment**
- **Hearing Impairment**
- **Other Health Impairment**
- **Physical Impairment**
- **Severe Multiple Impairment**
- **Specific Learning Disability**
- **Speech and Language Impairment**
- **Traumatic Brain Injury**
- **Visual Impairment**

Family Matters provides parents and families with information about special education and other resources. Download the Family Matters information flyer and share it with parents and families that might be looking for information about special education.

www.michigan.gov/specialeducation-familymatters

RESOURCES

ARC of Bay County

709 Columbus Avenue
Bay City, MI 48708
989.893.1346
www.arcmi.org

Arenac County Department of Human Services

3709 Deep River Road
Standish, MI 48658
989-846-5500

Arenac County Probate Court

120 N Grove Street
PO Box 609
Standish, MI 48658
989-846-6131

Arenac Opportunities, Inc.

4358 Airpark Drive
Standish, MI 48658
989.846.4441

Bay-Arenac Behavioral Health Arenac Center

1000 West Cedar (M-61)
Standish, MI 48658
989.846.4573 or 1.800.891.2472

Bay Arenac Behavioral Health

201 Mulholland Ave
Bay City, MI 48708
1.800.448.5498
989.895.2300 or 989.895.2300
www.babha.org

Bay County Department of Human Services

1399 West Center Road
Essexville, MI 48732
989.895.2100

Bay County Health Department Children's Special Health Care

1200 Washington Ave
Bay City, MI 48708
989.895.4235
www.baycounty-mi.gov/health/

Bay Psychological Associates

1420 Center Ave
Bay City, MI 48708
989.686.1990
www.baypsychologicalca.com

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Great Lakes Bay Region

2200 North Saginaw Road
Midland, MI 48640
989.631.5360
www.bbbsgreatlakesbay.org

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Great Lakes Bay Region

Administrative Office
300 W. Lafayette
Bay City, MI 48706
989.892.6723
www.bcclubs.org

Catholic Family Services

915 Columbus Avenue
Bay City, MI 48708
989.892.2504
www.cfssite.org/location/baycity

Central Michigan Health Department Arenac Office

3727 Deep River Road
Standish, MI 48658
989.846.6541
www.cmdhd.org

CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder)

Tri County Chapter
989.737.0735
www.chadd.org

Delta Psychological and Neuro-behavioral Services

114 Tuscola Road
Bay City, MI 48708
989.895.0788
www.deltapsych.com

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)
Great Lakes Bay Region
989.450.4968

Disability Services Resource Center
1820 North Trumbull Drive
Bay City, MI 48708
989.895.5444
www.dsrbcc.org

Do-All Incorporated
1400 South Lincoln
Bay City, MI 48708
989.894.2851
www.doallinc.org

Dow Bay Area Family Y
225 Washington Ave
Bay City, MI 48708
989.895.8596
www.ymcabaycity.org

List Psychological Services
(2 Locations)
126 Washington Avenue
Bay City, MI 48708
989.684.7977

List Psychological Services
(2nd location)
3720 E Wilder Rd Suite B
Bay City, MI 48706
989.460.1000
www.listpsych.com

Michigan Department of Human Services-Rehabilitation Services
3709 Deep River Road
Standish, MI 48658
989-846-4190 or 877-901-9181

Michigan Department of Human Services-Rehabilitation Services
1399 W. Center Road
Essexville, MI 48732
989-894-6300 or 877-901-9181
www.michigan.gov/dhs

MPA Group Ltd.
1217 South Euclid Avenue
Bay City, MI 48706
989.667.9661
www.mpacounseling.com

Neighborhood Resource Center
709 Ninth Street
Bay City, MI 48708
989.895.3510

Planning for Living
2355 Delta Road
Bay City, MI 48706
989.684.6832
www.planningforliving.net

Project Find
Bay Arenac ISD
1435 West Center Road
Essexville, MI 48732
989.893.3993

Sacred Heart Rehabilitation Center
1106 Washington
Bay City, MI 48708
989.894.2991
www.sacredheartcenter.com

Sterling Area Health Center
725 East State Street
Sterling, MI 48659
989.654.2491
www.sterlinghealth.net

Survivors of Suicide Support Group
989.781.5260
www.saginawsurvivorsof suicide.org
www.afsp.org

The Arc Arenac Area
P.O. Box 805
Standish, MI 48658
arc.arenac@gmail.com

Wellspring Lutheran Services
6019 West Side Saginaw Road
Bay City, MI 48707
989.686.7650

State and National Support Services

ARC Michigan, The
1325 S. Washington Ave
Lansing, MI 48910
1.800.292.7851
www.arcmi.org

Brain Injury Association of Michigan
7305 Grand River, Suite 100
Brighton, MI 48114-7379
810.229.5880 or 1.800.444.6443
www.biami.org

Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education (CAUSE)
924 Centennial Way, Suite 460
Lansing, MI 48917
517.886.9167 or 1.800.221.9105
www.causeonline.org

Deaf Blind Central Michigan Training and Resource Project
1 Central Michigan University
105 Sloan Hall
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859
989.774.2725
www.afb.org

Division on Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing
201 N. Washington Square
Lansing, MI 48913
877.499.6232

Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan
1026 N Washington Ave
Lansing, MI 48906
517.319.0370
www.ldaofmichigan.org

March of Dimes
536 Perry Road
Grand Blanc, MI 48439
810.606.8014
www.marchofdimes.org

Michigan Department of Civil Rights
Flint State Office Bldg 7th Floor
125 East Union
Flint, MI 48502
810.760.2805
www.michigan.gov/mdcr

Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service
4095 Legacy Parkway Suite 500
Lansing, MI 48911
517.487.1755 or 1.800.288.5923
www.mpcs.org

Office for Civil Rights
US Department of Education
500 W Madison St Suite 1427
Chicago, IL 60661
313.730.1700
www2.ed.gov

Office of Special Education (OSE)
600 W Allegan Street
PO Box 30008
Lansing, MI 48933
517.241.1235
www.michigan.gov/mde

Schizophrenics Anonymous
PO Box 941222
Houston TX 77094-8222
989.895.9080
www.sardaa.org

State Board of Education
608 W Allegan St
PO Box 30008
Lansing MI 48909
517.373.3324
www.michigan.gov/mde

State Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
PO Box 30008
Lansing MI 48909
1.800.320.8384
www.seacenmi.org

**Tourette's Syndrome Support
Group Michigan Chapter**
313.288.8722
www.tsa-michigan.org

**Free or Low-Cost
Legal Services**

Legal Services of Eastern Michigan
320 South Washington 3rd Floor
Saginaw MI 48607
989.755.4465
1.866.428.1604
www.lsem-mi.org

**Michigan Protection and
Advocacy Service**
4095 Legacy Parkway Suite 500
Lansing MI 48911
517.487.1755
1.800.288.5923
www.mpas.org



Special Education
4228 Two Mile Road
Bay City, MI 48706-2324



Procedural Safeguards Notice:
[https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/
May09-ProceduralSafeguardsNotice_278611_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/May09-ProceduralSafeguardsNotice_278611_7.pdf)