



EXITING SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education is not a “place” nor is it intended to be a lifelong service. The determination of eligibility for special education is a thoughtful and rigorous process. Although some students will require services for an extended period, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) conceptualizes special education as supports, services, and protections used only as long as students need them. Educators and parents must place the same consideration and care on a student’s exit from special education as they do the entrance.

1. What Parents Can Expect

Rights and protections regarding services, evaluations, IEP meetings, consent, and notice remain in place until your child exits special education via one of the four exit scenarios outlined on this page. A student’s exit from public education does not necessarily end his/her access to important supports. Making connections to adult support services necessary for achieving postsecondary goals is part of good transition planning for students.

2. Graduation, IDEA § 300.102

The student earns a “regular” high school diploma upon meeting state and school graduation requirements that is the same diploma earned by students without disabilities. The school will provide Notice and a Summary of Performance (SOP) indicating the student’s academic achievement and functional performance, including recommendations to assist in meeting postsecondary goals, but is not required to hold an IEP or conduct a Review of Existing Evaluation Data (REED).

3. FAPE Age Requirements, MARSE R 340.1702

The student exceeds the age eligibility for FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) under Michigan special education law (i.e., the student turns age 26 *before* September 1 of the school year of enrollment). The school will provide Notice and a Statement of Performance (SOP) indicating the student’s academic achievement and functional performance, including recommendations to assist in meeting postsecondary goals, but is not required to hold an IEP or conduct a REED.

4. Ineligible Evaluation, IDEA § 300.305

The student is evaluated following all reevaluation requirements and no longer meets eligibility criteria for special education. The evaluation process must include a REED and may include additional testing or may be solely based on existing evaluation data. The evaluation must culminate in an IEP incorporating evaluation findings, which indicates the student is no longer eligible for special education.

5. Revocation of Services, IDEA § 300.300

The parent, or student who has reached the age of majority, revokes consent for the provision of special education services. The revocation must be in writing and the school will provide Notice before ceasing the provision of special education and related services. The school is then no longer required to provide services, convene an IEP team, or develop an IEP for further provision of special education and related services.