

Division of Special Education

Vision

All children get necessary support for healthy development and lifelong learning. (2020)

Mission

Provide leadership to ensure a high quality education for Minnesota’s children and youth with disabilities.

Guiding Principles

- 1. Provide leadership**
We provide educational support and guidance to Minnesota’s broader educational communities.
- 2. Support whole-child thinking**
Educational support is based on each child’s unique needs to prepare them for further education, employment, independent living, and community participation.
- 3. Collaborate with our partners**
We collaborate with and value the contributions of our partners.
- 4. Model accountability**
We promote and measure evidence-based outcomes that are meaningful to our communities.

Special Education in Minnesota—By the Numbers

Children and Youth with Disabilities ¹	Students with Disabilities ¹	Graduation Rates 2013-2018	Full-Time Special Ed and Paraprofessional Staff ²
Birth – 21 147,605	K – 12 128,367	Up 4.54% over six years	29,221

PBIS* Schools in Minnesota ¹	Students Reached Through PBIS ¹	Percent of all K-12 Students with Disabilities Disciplined ²	Students with Disabilities Pursuing Post-Secondary School or Training ²	Students with Disabilities Finding Competitive or Other Employment ²
721	353,075	9.8%	29%	52%

¹Data from the 2017-18 School Year

²Data from the 2016-17 School Year

*Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports

Special Education Division Strategic Planning Goal

Align our work to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and World's Best Workforce through focuses on most integrated setting, transition and graduation, and equity. By aligning this work, our stories of results in special education can be shared and highlighted in Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) communication strategies and messages.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Purpose Statement

IDEA ensures that all children with disabilities receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). FAPE emphasizes that special education and related services must meet students' unique needs and prepare them for postsecondary education, employment and independent living. Most of the program costs are for staff, services, and support.

This program supports all five of the World's Best Workforce goals.

Services Provided

Students receiving special education services must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP helps students with disabilities with schoolwork and helps them make progress toward graduation according to their individualized goals. Students are eligible for IDEA Part B services if they meet specific state eligibility requirements under one or more of 13 disability categories as defined in Minnesota Rules.

Goals of special education:

- Provide FAPE in the least restrictive environment.
- Improve performance on statewide assessments.
- Increase special education student graduation rates.
- Coordinate services for students receiving support from more than one agency.

FAPE is defined as instruction and services that are:

- Based on eligibility and need.
- Written into an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

IDEA Part B Service Eligibility

To be eligible for special education IDEA Part B services, students ages 3-21 must be:

- Found to have a disability.
- In need of specialized instruction and related services.

IDEA Part C Service Eligibility

To be eligible for special education IDEA Part C infant and toddler intervention services, infants and toddlers aged birth-2 must meet at least one of the three components:

- They meet the criteria for any one of Minnesota's recognized special education disability categories.
- They have a demonstrated developmental delay.
- They are diagnosed with a physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay.
- The combination of these laws and rules require the provision of FAPE for all eligible children and youth with disabilities.