

## **CHILD FIND**

Although the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing & the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf (MECDHH/GBSD) does not have the responsibility for identification of deaf and hard of hearing students as described for School Administrative Units (SAUs) in Section IV.2 of the Maine Unified Special Education Regulations, it affirms its role in supporting services for students with hearing loss.

**PROCEDURE:** The Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing & The Governor Baxter School for the Deaf will annually send notice to all SAUs describing its services and programs for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Special Education Directors will be requested to send the names of newly-identified students and their parents to MECDHH/GBSD on an ongoing basis so that MECDHH/GBSD can inform families of the programs and activities occurring at MECDHH/GBSD in order to assist the SAUs with the referral process after the Child Find process is completed.

Child Find seeks to ensure that all students located and evaluated who are school-age (5 through the school year in which they turn 20) and who are in need of special education and supportive assistance—including state wards, state agency clients, students who have been suspended or expelled, students attending private schools and home schools, institutional residents, highly mobile students with disabilities, and students who are suspected of being disabled and in need of special education and supportive assistance even though they are advancing from grade to grade.

This Child Find responsibility shall be accomplished through a process that, while not a definitive or final judgment of a student's capabilities or disability, is a possible indicator of special education needs. Final identification of students with disabilities and programming for such students occurs only after an appropriate evaluation and a determination by the IEP Team.

The Child Find process shall include obtaining data on each student, through direct assessment or by indirect means of the student's academic performance, gross and fine motor skills, receptive and expressive language skills, vision, hearing and cognitive skills.

If the Child Find process indicates that a student may require special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education, the student shall be referred to the IEP team to determine the student's eligibility for special education services. School staff, parents or agency representatives may refer students to the IEP team if they believe that the student, because of a disability, may be in need of special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education.

Some factors that may be considered when making a referral might include whether the student has accumulated the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year, has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons in excess of 10 cumulative school days in the school year, or has experienced an illness, hospitalization, or accident that may indicate a need for special education and supportive services. These considerations are guidelines only and do not mandate or preclude referral to the IEP team.

Legal Reference: 34 CFR § 300.111.300.201 (2006)  
Ch. 101 5 iv.2 (2007) (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rules)

**Adopted: July 10, 1997**

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