

ADOPTED: November 16, 2012
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CHILD FIND

MSAD 54 seeks to ensure that all children residing in its jurisdiction who are school-age (5 through the school year in which they turn 20), including children with disabilities who are homeless children, are wards of the State or state agency clients, children with disabilities attending private schools and receiving home instruction, highly mobile children (including migrant or homeless), children who have the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year, and children incarcerated in county jails, and who are in need of special education and related services, even though they are advancing from grade to grade, are identified, located and evaluated at public expense.

MSAD 54 shall provide child find during the first 30 days of the school year or during the first 30 days of enrollment for transfer children. If evidence of child find activities and a statement of the results can be found in a child's cumulative record, or MSAD 54 has reason to believe the child has previously been identified as a child with a disability by another SAU, in state or out of state, child find is not necessary.

MSAD 54's child find responsibility shall be accomplished through a unit-wide process which, 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.

This child find process shall include obtaining data on each child through multiple measures, direct assessment, and parent information regarding the child's academic and functional performance, gross and fine motor skills, receptive and expressive language skills, vision, hearing and cognitive skills. MSAD 54 may schedule child find activities during its annual kindergarten enrollment to assist in planning for necessary special education and related service at the start of the school year. If screening occurs in the spring prior to school entry, MSAD 54 will refer the child to the regional CDS site within 10 school days.

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 or other individuals with knowledge of the child may refer children 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. Such a referral should follow MSAD 54's pre-referral and referral policy.

If any referral is made to the IEP Team, including a referral requesting evaluation of existing data on the child, the parents of the child shall be sent prior written notice of the referral as defined in Maine Unified Special Education Regulations (MUSER).

References: 34 CFR 300.111(a)(i,ii) and (c)(1,2), Maine Unified Special Education Regulations, IV (2) (2012)