WEBSTER COUNTY SCHOOLS
"ONE COMMUNITY, ONE SCHOOL, ONE FAMILY."
7168 Washington St.
Preston, GA 31824
www.websterbobcats.org

Special Education Procedure Guide

Sydney Barfield, Director of Special Education

2026-2027

Note: The purpose of this manual is to provide a guide for users on the implementation of special education services in Webster County. It is not intended to establish mandates or ministerial duties, and nothing herein should be viewed as taking away from an IEP team's need to provide their own professional judgment to a particular situation. Instead, the teams using this guide are encouraged to use their discretion and address each situation on a case-by-case basis, so long as they comply with federal and state law. This manual is not intended to create new rights under any applicable state or federal law. It is also not intended to supplant any existing laws or rights. Instead, readers are referred to Webster County's Parental Rights. These Rights, the IDEA, and the State special education regulations are the controlling provisions for services in Webster County. This manual covers applied procedures and frequently asked questions and is not intended to cover every situation. Further information is available by contacting Sydney Barfield, Director of Special Education for Webster County.

Webster County Local Board of Education Approved July 8, 2025

Area of General Supervision I: Identification Process.....9
CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION
State Rule: 160-4-7-.08..... 10
CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.....10
SAFEGUARDS..... 10
MAINTAINING SPECIAL EDUCATION RECORDS..... 10
ACCESS RIGHTS AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES.....10
AMENDMENT OF RECORDS AT PARENT REQUEST..... 11
RESULTS OF HEARING..... 11
PARENT CONSENT..... 11
DESTRUCTION OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.....12
STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM
State Rule:160-4-2-.32..... 12
REQUIREMENT FOR LOCAL SCHOOL SST.....12
STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM MEMBERS..... 12
STEPS OF THE STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM PROCESS..... 13
STUDENT EVALUATION.....13
DOCUMENTATION OF STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM ACTIVITIES.....13
SUPERVISION AND MONITORING OF THE RTI PROCESS..... 13
EXCEPTIONS TO THE USE OF THE SST PROCESS..... 14
RTI PROCESS WEBSTER COUNTY PRE K.....14
CHILD FIND PROCEDURES
State Rule: 160-4-7-.03..... 15
CHILD FIND.....15
PUBLIC NOTICE OF ANNUAL CHILD FIND ACTIVITY..... 15
SCREENING / EVALUATION OF CHILDREN WITH SUSPECTED DISABILITY (3-21).15
CHILDREN, AGES BIRTH TO THREE.....15
PRESCHOOL CHILDREN, AGES THREE TO FIVE.....15
CHILDREN ENROLLED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS. 16
CHILDREN WHO ARE DETAINED OR INCARCERATED IN JAILS OR CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES..... 16
HIGHLY MOBILE CHILDREN / MIGRANT CHILDREN.....16
PARENTALLY-PLACED PRIVATE SCHOOL CHILDREN, INCLUDING RELIGIOUS, ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, OR HOME SCHOOL/STUDY PROGRAMS..... 16
SCREENING.....17
INTERVENTIONS PRIOR TO REFERRAL / EXCEPTIONS..... 17
CHILD FIND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS..... 17
How can children be referred?.....17
When should a child be referred to Child Find?.....18

What is Special Education, and who is eligible for services? 18
Where can I find out more about Child Find? 18
SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR CHILD FIND 19
EVALUATIONS AND REEVALUATIONS
State Rule: 160-4-7-.04 19
INITIAL EVALUATION REFERRAL PROCESS 19
TIMELINES EXCEPTIONS 21
PARENTAL CONSENT 21
REEVALUATION CONSIDERATION 21
COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATIONS 22
SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR EVALUATIONS AND REEVALUATIONS 23
SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR BCW PROCEDURES 25
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY 25
ELIGIBILITY TEAM 25
DOCUMENTATION OF ELIGIBILITY RESULTS 26
EXCLUSIONARY FACTORS 26
DETERMINATION OF THE DISABILITY AND NEED FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION (DISMISSAL) 26
ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION AND CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBILITY
STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.05 26
CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBILITY 26
AUTISM 26
DEAF-BLIND 27
DEAF/HARD OF HEARING (D/HH) 28
EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDER 29
INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES 31
MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (MID) 32
MODERATE INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (MOID) 32
SEVERE INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (SID) 32
PROFOUND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (PID) 32
ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENT (OI) 33
OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT (OHI) 33
SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY (SDD) 35
SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES (SLD) 36
THE SLD ELIGIBILITY GROUP 40
SPEECH-LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT (SI) 40
TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI) 42
VISUAL IMPAIRMENT (VI) 43
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY BY ELIGIBILITY TEAM 45
DOCUMENTATION OF ELIGIBILITY / INELIGIBILITY 45
ELIGIBILITY AND INITIAL PLACEMENT PROCEDURES 45

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR ELIGIBILITY....46
PRIVATE SCHOOLS
STATE RULE: 160-4-7.13....47
CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES REFERRED OR PLACED IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS BY LEA....47
CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES PLACED IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS BY PARENTS AND LEA OFFER OF FAPE....47
PROVISION OF WRITTEN NOTICE BY A PARENT TO PLACE IN PRIVATE SCHOOL... 47
REIMBURSEMENT AND LIMITATIONS OF REIMBURSEMENT....48
CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES ENROLLED BY THEIR PARENTS IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS....48
CHILD FIND PROCESS AND CHILDREN IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS....48
PART B AND RELATED SERVICES FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS....49
PROVISION OF IEPS AND SERVICE PLANS TO PRIVATE PLACED STUDENTS....49
CONSULTATION WITH PRIVATE SCHOOLS FOR CHILD COUNT AND PRIVATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATION AT IEP MEETINGS....49
AREA OF GENERAL SUPERVISION II: SERVICES AND SUPPORTS....51
LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)
STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.07....52
LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT....52
WEBSTER COUNTY LRE DECISION MAKING PROCESS....52
ANNUAL IEP PLACEMENT DETERMINATION....52
FULL CONTINUUM OF ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENTS....52
LOCATION OF SERVICES....53
PRESCHOOL PLACEMENTS AND SERVICES....53
SCHOOL-AGE PLACEMENTS AND SERVICES....53
NON-ACADEMIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR SETTINGS....54
SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR LRE....54
DISCIPLINE
STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.10....55
DISCIPLINE....55
INTERIM ALTERNATIVE SETTINGS AND 10 DAY RULE....55
MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION....57
FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT / BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN....57
SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES....57
NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE OF PLACEMENT....58
APPEAL PROCESS....58
EXPEDITED DUE PROCESS HEARING:....58
PLACEMENT DURING APPEALS....59
PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN NOT YET ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES [34 C.F.R. § 300.534 (a)]....59
REFERRAL TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AND JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES....60

CHANGE OF PLACEMENT BECAUSE OF DISCIPLINARY REMOVALS....60
WEBSTER COUNTY DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES....61
General Information:....61
Defining “Change of Placement”....62
Serious Violations (weapons, drugs, or inflicting serious bodily injury on another person)....62
SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR DISCIPLINE....63
INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) STATE RULE 160-4-7-.06....63
IEP....63
IEP TEAM....63
CONTENT OF THE IEP....64
PARENT PARTICIPATION....64
WEBSTER COUNTY PROCEDURES: REQUIRED SECTIONS OF THE IEP....65
PARENT PARTICIPATION NOTIFICATIONS OF MEETINGS....65
EXCUSAL OF IEP TEAM MEMBER....65
MEETING PARTICIPANTS....66
DEVELOPING THE IEP....66
PRESENT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE....67
ASSESSMENTS AND IDENTIFIED NEEDS (ACADEMIC, FUNCTIONAL, DEVELOPMENTAL)....67
EFFECT OF THE DISABILITY....67
PARENTAL CONCERNS....67
CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL FACTORS....67
MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS & SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES....68
CRITERIA FOR MEASUREMENT OF GOALS/ OBJECTIVES....68
PROGRESS REPORTING AND SCHEDULE....69
PLAN FOR SERVICES....69
CONSIDERATION OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY....69
EXPLANATION FOR EXCLUSION OF PARTICIPATION WITH NON-DISABLED PEERS EXPLANATION....70
TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS OR MODIFICATIONS....70
STATE ASSESSMENT....70
STUDENT SUPPORTS: ACCOMMODATIONS, SUPPLEMENTAL AIDS AND SERVICES, AND SUPPORTS....71
CONSIDERATION OF EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR....71
EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR....71
ESY SUMMARY....72
TRANSITION SERVICES....72
MEASURABLE POST-SECONDARY OUTCOME/COMPLETION GOALS:....72
MEASURABLE TRANSITION IEP GOALS:....72
STUDENT INVOLVEMENT: PREFERENCES AND INTERESTS....73

TRANSITION ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES:....73
PERSONS AND AGENCY INVOLVED:....73
DATE OF COMPLETION AND ACHIEVED OUTCOME:....73
TRANSFER OF RIGHTS....73
EXCUSAL OF IEP TEAM MEMBER....74
TRANSITION FOR CHILDREN AGES, BIRTH-TWO (PART C)....74
PARENT PARTICIPATION IN THE IEP....74
IEP / IFSP....74
TRANSFER WITHIN THE STATE OF GEORGIA....75
OUT OF STATE TRANSFER....76
FERPA AND THE TRANSMITTAL OF RECORDS....77
REVIEW AND REVISION OF THE IEP....77
DEVELOPMENT, REVIEW, AND REVISION OF THE IEP....77
MINUTES OF MEETING (MEETING NOTES)....78
AMENDING THE IEP....78
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS....78
FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT AND BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN...78
PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING (FBA) AND DEVELOPING A (BIP)....79
PERSONNEL, FACILITIES, AND CASELOADS STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.14....79
MAINTENANCE OF CREDENTIALS FOR PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES....79
CLASSROOM SIZE AND APPROPRIATENESS....79
MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE AND CASELOAD BY ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY....80
GEORGIA NETWORK FOR EDUCATIONAL AND THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT (GNETS) STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.15....81
GEORGIA NETWORK FOR EDUCATIONAL AND THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT (GNETS). 81
ELIGIBILITY AND PLACEMENT....82
DOCUMENTATION OF ONGOING EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT....82
RECOMMENDED CLASS SIZE BY LEVEL....82
POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS....83
ACADEMIC CURRICULUM....83
AREA OF GENERAL SUPERVISION III: STUDENT PROGRESS....84
FREE AND APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE) STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.02....85
FAPE: FULL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY....85
FAPE FOR STUDENTS AGED 22....85
FAPE PROVISIONS BY STUDENTS 3RD BIRTHDAY....85
FAPE FOR INCARCERATED STUDENTS....85
DEFINITION OF REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA....86
DELAY OF SERVICES NOT ALLOWED....86
MEDICAID PAYMENT ALLOWANCES AND LIMITATIONS....86

NOTICE TO PARENTS REGARDING USE OF BENEFITS....86
RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT....87
PROVISION OF ACCESSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS....87
PROVISION OF UPKEEP AND DISPOSITION OF INVENTORY & EQUIPMENT....87
PROVISION OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY....87
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EVALUATIONS....87
HOME USE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY....87
FAPE AND EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR....88
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ACCESSIBILITY....88
ACCESS TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPECIALLY DESIGNED PHYSICAL EDUCATION....88
SERVICES TO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS: LEA AND NON-LEA CHARTERS....88
PROGRAMMING OPTIONS AND EQUAL ACCESS....89
HEARING EQUIPMENT CHECKS....89
PROHIBITION OF MANDATORY MEDICATION....89
AREA OF GENERAL SUPERVISION IV: PARENT ENGAGEMENT....90
PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS AND PARENT RIGHTS
STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.09....91
WHEN PARENTAL RIGHTS MUST BE GIVEN....91
CONTENT OF PARENTAL RIGHTS....91
PARENTAL OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW RECORDS....91
PARENTAL PARTICIPATION IN MEETING....92
INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATIONS....92
INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA: SPEECH AND LANGUAGE....93
INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA: OCCUPATIONAL AND PHYSICAL THERAPY....94
INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY....95
PARENTAL CONSENT....96
PARENT REFUSAL OR REVOCATION OF CONSENT....96
PARENT CONSENT NOT REQUIRED....97
PARENT TRAINING....97
SURROGATE PARENT
STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.11....97
SURROGATE PARENTS....97
GUIDELINES TO DETERMINE THE NEED FOR A SURROGATE PARENT....98
CRITERIA FOR SURROGATE PARENT SELECTION....98
SURROGATE PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES....98
DISPUTE RESOLUTION
STATE RULE: 160-4-7.12....98
DISPUTE RESOLUTION....98

STATE COMPLAINT PROCESS..... 98
STATE COMPLAINT..... 99
DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT PROCESS..... 99
DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT..... 99
RESPONSIBILITY TO FILE DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT NOTICE..... 99
RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT NOTICE OF THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM FOR WHICH YOU ARE FILING A DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT..... 100
PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE REGARDING THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT..... 100
RESOLUTION SESSION..... 100
IMPARTIAL DUE PROCESS HEARING..... 101
ATTORNEYS' FEES..... 102
MEDIATION..... 103
AREA OF GENERAL SUPERVISION V: READINESS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER..... 104
BRIDGE LAW
STATE HOUSE BILL 400..... 105
BRIDGE LAW..... 105
SIXTH, SEVENTH, AND EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS:..... 105
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS..... 105
AREA VI: RELATED SERVICES..... 105
RELATED SERVICES..... 105
AREA VII: SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITIES..... 107
FACILITATE ALL MEETINGS..... 107
MAINTAIN CASELOAD STUDENT FILES..... 107
KNOW YOUR STUDENT'S IEP..... 107
REMAIN INIEPLIANCE..... 107
VIII: QUICK GUIDE REFERENCES..... 108
QUICK GUIDE: STEPS TO THE EVALUATION PROCESS..... 109
QUICK GUIDE TO GO-IEP..... 110
QUICK GUIDE: Accessing the Special Education Shared Drive..... 111
Verification Form..... 112

Area of General Supervision I: Identification Process

CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION
State Rule: 160-4-7-.08

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Confidentiality is one of the rights afforded to parents in the Parent Rights document (procedural safeguards). Confidentiality of educational records is a basic right shared by all children in public schools and their parents. These fundamental rights are described in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, which applies to all students, not only those with disabilities. All system personnel, including contracted employees, are governed by confidentiality requirements and should receive training and information regarding the law. Written and dated parental consent must be obtained before personally identifiable information is disclosed to unauthorized individuals, organizations, or agencies unless authorized to do so under FERPA

SAFEGUARDS

As a procedural safeguard, Webster County must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction. Access to unauthorized personally identifiable information without parental consent is forbidden. All persons collecting or using personally identifiable information must receive training or instruction regarding department policies and procedures concerning personally identifiable information. Each LEA must maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of employees within the LEA who may have access to personally identifiable information.

MAINTAINING SPECIAL EDUCATION RECORDS

For students enrolled in special education, any reference to special education status documented in a student's permanent records would place the record under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) confidentiality requirements. It is mandated that reference to special education status be maintained in a separate supplemental file and not specifically by reference on the student's permanent record/card. The permanent record/card should indicate that a special education file does exist and should be reviewed. Such a designation would indicate to any review that additional information is available and should be considered before drawing any conclusions regarding that student's record. Verbal references to a student's special education program should be carefully restricted only to professional staff working with the student or professional staff working in the interests of the student.

ACCESS RIGHTS AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

Confidential information, including a student's school special education folder, maintained by the special education case manager or special education district-level office, should be kept in a locked cabinet or specially keyed room. Electronic copies of records must be password-protected with restricted rights approved by the special education director. Each Special Education Folder must have an access record form in the folder. Electronic files will log access in the GO IEP program. All persons reviewing the folder must sign their name, date, and

purpose on the access record form. All agencies and agents who have access to these student records are listed below:

Special Education Director	Occupational Therapist
Special Education Teacher	Occupational Therapy Assistant
School Psychologist	Principals
Speech Therapist	School Counselors
Physical Therapist	Designated Administrators/Staff
Physical Therapist Assistant	School Social Worker

AMENDMENT OF RECORDS AT PARENT REQUEST

Parents who believe that information contained in the education records collected, maintained, or used is inaccurate or misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of the student may request that Webster County Schools amend the information. If any Webster County School employee receives a parent request to amend a Special Education Record, the employee should contact the Special Education Director immediately. The LEA must decide whether to amend the information in accordance with the request within a reasonable period of receipt of the request. If the LEA decides to refuse to amend the information in accordance with the request, it must inform the parents of the refusal and advise the parents of their right to a hearing. The LEA must, on request, provide an opportunity for a hearing to challenge information in education records to ensure that it is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child. The hearing held must be conducted according to the procedures under FERPA and its regulations.

RESULTS OF HEARING

If, as a result of the hearing, the LEA decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child, it must amend the information accordingly and so inform the parents in writing. If, as a result of the hearing, the agency decides the information is accurate and not misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student, it must inform the parents of their right to place in the records it maintains on the child, a statement commenting on the information and setting forth the reasons for disagreeing with the decision of the LEA. Any explanation placed in the records of the student must be maintained by Webster County School System as part of the records of the child, as long as the records are maintained.

PARENT CONSENT

Parental consent must be obtained before personally identifiable information is disclosed to other parties unless the disclosure is authorized without parental consent. Prior consent is NOT required to release information to parents or eligible children, other school officials, authorized

federal, state, or local representatives in connection with an audit, organizations conducting studies for educational agencies, in compliance for judicial subpoenas, in connection with health or safety emergencies, or the office of civil rights.

A Webster County Release of Records form will be signed by the child's parent/guardian to document parent consent. Release of Records forms must be submitted to the student records clerk and documented by the special education director before the release of any student's special education record. Consent for electronic communications is necessary to have personally identifiable information shared via text or email.

DESTRUCTION OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Destruction means physical destruction or removal of personal identifiers from information so that the information is no longer personally identifiable. The Webster County Special Education Department follows the Georgia Local Government Records Retention Schedule.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM
State Rule:160-4-2-.32

REQUIREMENT FOR LOCAL SCHOOL SST

The Student Support Team (SST) is an interdisciplinary group that uses a systematic process to address the learning and/or behavior problems of students, K-12, in a school. Prior to a child being referred for Special Education, the student goes through various tiers in the school's Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS). Each Webster County School will have a student support team as part of the MTSS/RTI process. See the Webster County MTSS Manual for detailed procedural guidance regarding our SST/RTI processes.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM MEMBERS

The student support team may include, at a minimum, the referring teacher and at least two of the following participants, as appropriate to the needs of the student:

Principal

General education teacher

Counselor

School psychologist

Lead teacher

Subject area specialist

ESOL teacher

Special Education Teacher

School social worker

Central office personnel

Section 504 Coordinator

Designated administrators

Other appropriate personnel

Parents

STEPS OF THE STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM PROCESS

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a fluid process where students can ascend and descend within the levels of intervention. Tier I includes evidence-based instruction, which is based on the Georgia Performance Standards. It includes effective school-wide behavior support and differentiated instruction to promote higher levels of student engagement and achievement. Tier II interventions serve as standard intervention protocols for students in the school who require extended learning opportunities or students who are not making adequate progress and need additional interventions. If students are not making the expected levels of progress in Tier II, they are referred to Tier III. Prevention through intervention is stressed in all tiers. Alternative strategies for increasing the students' academic, social, speech, and behavioral performance are identified, reviewed, and implemented. SSTs should follow the policies and procedures outlined in the system's MTSS manual.

Documentation of Tier II and Tier III interventions and progress monitoring will be included in the RTI folder. For a Tier IV referral, which is a special education referral, the students must have documentation of evidence-based academic or behavioral interventions. RTI data is reviewed by the district MTSS coordinator and the school psychologist to be sure that interventions were provided with fidelity and that progress monitoring data support the Tier IV referral. If data does not support the Tier IV referral, the SST committee reconvenes to review the data and make adjustments to the RTI plan. A referral to Tier IV will not occur until the RTI process is complete, including sufficient research or evidence-based academic or behavioral interventions with supporting progress monitoring data.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Once a referral is made for other supplemental or support services, an evaluation and/or assessment may be conducted. Webster County School psychologists will review any prior evaluations and/or assessments.

DOCUMENTATION OF STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM ACTIVITIES

Documentation of SST activities/meetings may include a detailed summary including the following: student's name, names of team members, meeting dates, identification of student learning and/or behavioral concerns, any records of assessment, educational plan, implementation results, and follow-up. Please refer to the Webster County Schools MTSS manual and shared drive for in-depth details regarding SST meeting procedures, as well as for progress monitoring procedures and forms.

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING OF THE RTI PROCESS

The implementation of RTI in each school is the responsibility of the building-level principal. This will be included in the principal's yearly evaluation with the superintendent.

The designated SST Coordinator/Teacher in each building is responsible for coordinating the RTI paperwork and implementation of the use of research or evidence-based interventions. A leadership team member serves on the building-level RTI team to ensure fidelity. Each nine weeks, a list of Tier II and Tier III student names and academic, behavioral, or speech concerns will be submitted to the special education director. MTSS procedures and documentation will be monitored by the special education director. If a school is found to be out of compliance, technical assistance will be provided to that school's RTI team.

Training will occur annually to keep teams up to date on MTSS procedures. District leaders, in collaboration with Principals, will ensure that Student Support Teams use a data-driven problem-solving process by providing ongoing professional development in the organization of paperwork, clear definitions of roles and responsibilities, processes, procedures, and legal aspects of SST.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE USE OF THE SST PROCESS

A student who is found to have an obvious and serious disability may bypass the SST process and be referred directly to special education. The Director of Special Education must approve this exception. In cases where immediate referral is sought, the SST may still determine what interim interventions may be implemented during the evaluation process.

RTI PROCESS WEBSTER COUNTY PRE K

Once a referral is received with all necessary documents attached (copy of birth certificate, copy of social security card, copy of immunization records, copy of EED, and proof of residence), the SST Coordinator will schedule a screening. BCW referrals are different in that we do not require all 6 necessary documents until the eligibility meeting.

The Prek Student Support Team (SST) screens the child and, if necessary, provides interventions for the teacher/parent to document progress for 4 to 6 weeks. During the 4 to 6-week period of interventions, the Prek Student Support Team (SST) Coordinator/Teacher will contact the teacher/parent to conduct follow-up conferences. * Note: Exceptions to the use of the SST process may occur for some students upon approval from the Director of Special Education. If the child is not making sufficient progress with interventions (progress monitoring documentation gathered at this time), the Prek SST will determine if evaluation is necessary. With written parental consent, the Prek SST Coordinator/Teacher, therapists, and preschool testing examiner evaluate the child. After compiling the evaluation results, the preschool testing examiner will schedule an eligibility determination meeting to include parent(s), teacher(s), pre-k director, and examiner(s). If a child is transferring from BCW, evaluation is typically completed a month before their 3rd birthday.

CHILD FIND PROCEDURES
State Rule: 160-4-7-.03

CHILD FIND

Child Find is a process that Webster County Schools uses to identify, locate, and evaluate all children in the district, birth through 21, who are suspected of having disabilities, including those who are homeless, are wards of the state or are attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need for special education and related services.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF ANNUAL CHILD FIND ACTIVITY

Public notification must be given before any significant Child Find activities are implemented. The Special Education Director will provide annual public notification in the following print and electronic sources:

❏ Webster County Schools Website

❏ Local Newspaper

❏ Child-Find Letter distributed to local health department, daycare facilities, physician offices, and social media sources.

*Note: Currently, there are no private schools within Webster County; should a private school open, appropriate notification will be provided.

SCREENING / EVALUATION OF CHILDREN WITH SUSPECTED DISABILITY (3-21)

The following policies and procedures are followed to ensure the identification, screening, and evaluation of children with suspected disabilities from birth through age 21, including:

CHILDREN, AGES BIRTH TO THREE

Once the Special Education Director is made aware of a child who is birth through age three suspected of having disabilities is identified through any Child Find activities (e.g. parent-teacher conference, community referral, migrant program), the Special Education Director will assign the case to the school system BCW coordinator to assist with the BCW procedures.

PRESCHOOL CHILDREN, AGES THREE TO FIVE

The following activities may be conducted to identify preschool children ages 3-5 suspected of having disabilities:

❏ Webster County School Pre-K Program will participate in Response to Intervention as part of Webster County Schools.

❑ Written notices are provided in the community to include the Webster County Health Department and physician offices. Referral forms can be obtained by contacting the Special Education Director or at the school.

CHILDREN ENROLLED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

Children currently enrolled in Webster County Schools will be identified through Response to Intervention and parent referral. Children who attend public charter schools and their parents retain all rights given to them in the public school under the IDEA.

CHILDREN WHO ARE DETAINED OR INCARCERATED IN JAILS OR CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Child-Find letters will be given to the facility with appropriate contact information so that any child suspected of having a disability can be referred to the Special Education Director.

HIGHLY MOBILE CHILDREN / MIGRANT CHILDREN

An occupational survey is sent home with all students at the beginning of the school year as a screener to identify students who may be eligible for the Migrant Education Program (MEP). Students who qualify for the preschool migrant program are provided services through the MEP. The Migrant Education Program staff will contact the Webster County Prek Director to make referrals for any Prek migrant student suspected of having developmental problems. Information regarding the Child Find Project is provided to Migrant Families in the District.

PARENTALLY-PLACED PRIVATE SCHOOL CHILDREN, INCLUDING RELIGIOUS, ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, OR HOME SCHOOL/STUDY PROGRAMS

Screening and evaluations are provided for any child, parentally placed in a private school or receiving homeschool, who is suspected of having a disability. If a parent or the private school staff suspects a child of having a disability, the system will conduct an evaluation in a timely manner. The child must pass a hearing and vision screening. Webster County Schools may conduct a hearing/vision screen at the special education office or at the zoned school (with parental consent), or parents may obtain the screenings from the child's physician or the health department. Parents and private schools are asked to provide documentation of interventions tried prior to the referral. After this information is obtained, a Referral for Evaluation must be completed, and the parents will be given a copy of Parental Rights and a list of tests that will be used in the evaluation. The parents will also need to sign a Parental Consent for Evaluation.

Webster County Schools will evaluate private and homeschool students within the Georgia Department of Education 60-day timeline requirement. Once testing is complete, the student's home school provider will be notified. An Eligibility/IEP meeting will be held. Eligibility will be determined following the same procedures for students who are enrolled in Webster County Schools.

If the student is eligible for special education services, the IEP team will develop an IEP (if the student is a resident of Webster County) and offer these services if the parent enrolls the student into Webster County Schools. If the parent chooses to enroll the child, the IEP team will project the implementation date of the IEP forward to a date when the child will be enrolled.

For students who are found eligible for special education and the parent chooses not to enroll the student in Webster County Schools, the IEP minutes will reflect this decision. If the student qualifies for equitable services, a Service Plan may be developed. There may be a waiting list for services through a service plan based on the school system's proportionate share. If funding is available, then a Services Plan will be written to provide the necessary equitable services. Special Education transportation will not be provided. The IEP/Services Plan will be reviewed annually.

The IEP will be offered if the student intends to enroll in Webster County Schools, and if the student does not enroll, a new Services Plan will be written as long as the student remains eligible. The original copies of the IEP/Services Plan and Eligibility will be sent to the special education office.

SCREENING

The screening of children by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation may not be considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services.

INTERVENTIONS PRIOR TO REFERRAL / EXCEPTIONS

Prior to referring a student for consideration for eligibility for special education and related services, a student must have received scientific, research, or evidence-based interventions selected to correct or reduce the academic, social, or behavioral problem the student is having. Exceptions are allowed only when evaluation and/or placement is required due to a significant disability, with the approval of the special education director.

CHILD FIND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can children be referred?

A referral may be made by anyone who has a concern about a child's development. All referrals are considered confidential. The parent retains the right to refuse services. Children may be referred by any of the following:

❏ Parents/legal guardians/foster parents

❏ Other family members

❏ Physicians/health care providers

❏ Preschool programs

❏ School system personnel

❏ Community agencies

❏ Private school personnel

❏ Others who are concerned about a child's development

When should a child be referred to Child Find?

A child should be referred when:

❏ A health or medical disorder interferes with development or learning.

❏ A child seems to have difficulty seeing or hearing.

❏ A child appears to have social, emotional, or behavioral difficulties that affect his/her ability to learn.

❏ A child has been diagnosed with a progressive or degenerative condition that will eventually impair or impede the child's ability to learn.

❏ A child seems to have difficulty understanding directions like others who are his/her age.

❏ A child's speech is not understandable to family or friends.

❏ A child has difficulty with reading, math, or other school subjects.

What is Special Education, and who is eligible for services?

Special Education is instruction designed to meet the unique learning strengths and needs of individual students with disabilities from birth through age 21. A child must be evaluated and identified as having a disability to be eligible for Special Education and /or related services. Programs are provided for students in all disability areas recognized by the State of Georgia. Disability categories are: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Deafblind, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Emotional and Behavioral Disorder, Intellectual Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Significant Developmental Delay, Specific Learning Disability, Speech/language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Visual Impairment.

Where can I find out more about Child Find?

For a preschool-aged child with a chronological age of 3 through 5 who has or may have a developmental disability, please contact Webster County Special Education Department at (229) 828-3365. Parents of students, kindergarten through 12th grade, who suspect their child may have a disability, should contact the principal and special education director.

When a student has been referred to MTSS, the MTSS coordinator at each school begins the MTSS process involving all team members appropriate for the specific student. A list of students participating in Tier II and Tier III is reported to the special education director once every nine weeks. The MTSS Coordinator is responsible for following the MTSS procedures as outlined in the MTSS manual.

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR CHILD FIND

❏ Notifications will be presented annually to the following print and electronic resources: Webster County Schools website, the local health department, physician offices, daycare providers, Head Start, and social media sources. The BCW coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that notifications are provided and submit documentation to the Director of Special Education.

❏ Professional learning is ongoing throughout the year with school administrators and teachers. After the initial professional learning of the year, special education staff are required to read the special education procedure guide and complete the verification form, documenting that they have read and understand the process for child find. Administrators are provided professional learning at leadership meetings and MTSS teams will also be trained through reading the manual and information presentations from the MTSS Coordinator/Special Director.

❏ MTSS documentation will be maintained in student RTI folders for each student in the process. RTI timelines and research, and evidence-based interventions are used by the team in providing interventions for the child find student. Monitoring occurs by the District MTSS Coordinator.

❏ If documentation shows that a school is in need of technical assistance, additional training is provided.

❏ Child find procedures will be monitored annually using the documentation checklist completed by the Director of Special Education to ensure that tasks and procedures are followed.

EVALUATIONS AND REEVALUATIONS
State Rule: 160-4-7-.04

INITIAL EVALUATION REFERRAL PROCESS

1. SST will collaborate with the Special Education Director or designee when considering referral to special education.

2. SST Coordinator submits the Response to Intervention (RTI) folder with required documentation as outlined on the Referral for Initial Evaluation Form to the Special Education Director or designee. This form must be submitted with their Response to Intervention (RTI) folder, including all documentation.

3. Special Education Director or designee will explain Parental Rights to the parent or guardian. Procedural safeguards and parent rights can be found in the MTSS shared drive or on the DOE website.

4. Special Education Director will add the student to GoIEP.

5. The Special Education Director will send an evaluation packet to the SST coordinator to obtain signatures on the Consent for Evaluation. The date that the signed Consent for Evaluation is received in the special education office is the date that starts the timeline.

6. The Special Education Director or Designee will scan and send the packet to Chattahoochee Flint RESA.

7. The Special Education Director or Designee will add the referring teacher, school psychologist, and/or speech-language pathologist (as appropriate) as a team member in GoIEP and will notify each regarding the request for an evaluation (administrators have access to all students in GoIEP).

8. The Special Education Director or Designee, school psychologist, and/or the speech-language pathologist are responsible for monitoring the timeline using the GoIEP day counter on the timeline page.

Timeline: The initial evaluation must be completed within 60 calendar days from the date the signed parent consent form giving permission for the evaluation is received in the special education office. When permission is given for the initial evaluation and less than 30 days of school are left in the school year, the school still has 60 days to complete the evaluation. The 60-day count stops when the teachers finish for the school year and starts again when they return for the new school year. It is important to note that when school is closed for more than 5 days for holidays or other breaks, those days and the weekends before and after do not count in the 60 days allowed for the initial evaluation.

9. The Special Education Director will monitor timelines monthly using GoIEP reports as well as the dashboard.

10. The Special Education Director will maintain a referral log to monitor compliance of timelines.

11 Case Manager will be responsible for inputting/refreshing GO-MTSS information into the eligibility report in GoIEP.

12. The School Psychologist will complete a psychological evaluation (if required) and will be responsible for interpreting the results during the eligibility meeting. The Case Manager will be responsible for inputting the results of the evaluation into GoIEP.

13. The speech-language pathologist will conduct a speech evaluation (if required) for articulation, language, and/or voice. The SLP will be responsible for interpreting and inputting the results into the eligibility report in GoIEP. The SLP will provide a written evaluation report. Additional screenings related to specific skill needs, including but not limited to motor function, may be conducted if deemed necessary during the evaluation process.

14. Tier 3 interventions must continue until eligibility is determined.

15. The Special Education teacher, in coordination with the Special Education Director, SLP, school psychologist, and parent/guardian will establish a data/time/location for the initial

eligibility meeting. The meeting must take place within 60 days of school personnel obtaining the signed Parental Consent for Special Education Evaluation.

TIMELINES EXCEPTIONS

The timeline described above does not apply to a LEA if the parent of a child repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the child for the evaluation. The timeline does not apply if a child enrolls in a school of another LEA after the relevant timeline in this Rule has begun and prior to a determination by the child's previous LEA as to whether the child is a child with a disability. The timeline exception applies only if the subsequent LEA is making sufficient progress to ensure a prompt completion of the evaluation and the parent and subsequent LEA have agreed to a specific time when the evaluation will be completed. Finally, if extenuating circumstances, e.g., illness, unusual evaluation needs, or revocation of parents' consent for evaluation, affect this timeline, the LEA may document the exceptions.

PARENTAL CONSENT

Written parent consent must be obtained prior to an initial evaluation or reevaluation. Parent consent packets are provided to parents through the special education office once the Request for Evaluation is received. Detailed documentation of attempts to obtain parent consent must be kept (e.g., records of telephone calls and results of those calls, copies of correspondence and any responses received, detailed records of visits made). If the parents refuse to give consent or fail to respond to a request to provide consent for an evaluation, the school system may, but is not required to, pursue the initial evaluation by using mediation and impartial due process hearing procedures provided for in the procedural safeguards. However, the school system may not use the consent override procedures for a student who is home-schooled or placed in a private school by the parents at their own expense.

For initial evaluations only, if the child is a ward of the State and is not residing with the child's parent, the LEA is not required to obtain informed consent from the parent for initial evaluation to determine whether the child is a child with a disability if: 1. Despite reasonable efforts to do so, the school system cannot discover the whereabouts of the parent of the child; 2. The rights of the parents of the child have been terminated in accordance with State law; or 3. The rights of the parents to make educational decisions have been subrogated by a judge in accordance with state law, and consent for an initial evaluation has been given by an individual appointed by the judge to represent the child.

REEVALUATION CONSIDERATION

A Reevaluation Determination, consistent with federal and state statutes and regulations, is required for special education students every three years. The purpose of reevaluation is to decide if further information is needed to determine if a disability continues to exist, to establish present levels of performance, or to determine whether the student continues to need special education and related services. If existing information satisfies these three needs, then further evaluation is not indicated.

At the reevaluation conference, the case manager will review all relevant data and help the team determine whether additional information is needed or not.

If the IEP Team determines that additional information is needed, the IEP Team must determine if the child needs a psychological evaluation. If a psychological evaluation is requested by the IEP team, it will be documented in a Reevaluation Data Review in GoIEP, and a referral for evaluation form will be completed at this meeting. An Evaluation consent packet will be sent to the parent from the special education office once the referral for evaluation form is received. A list of assessments that may be performed must be given to the parent, and a referral for evaluation must be completed, along with a current hearing and vision screening. Once the evaluation is complete, an Eligibility/IEP meeting will be set up to review the results and to document eligibility. The date of this IEP/Eligibility Meeting will become the new eligibility date. All paperwork will be submitted to the special education office.

COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATIONS

The evaluation of children referred because of learning and/or behavior problems is the responsibility of a multidisciplinary evaluation team. The district assesses children in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities. For children who require a psychological and clinical evaluation, it must be conducted by a qualified psychological examiner. Evaluation results used for consideration of eligibility for special education, if not provided by a school psychologist, may be from one of the following:

❏ A psychologist licensed by the Georgia Board of Examiners of Psychologists and having training and experience in school psychology or child clinical psychology.

❏ A full-time graduate student in an approved, properly supervised school psychology or child clinical psychology training program internship/practicum, who has completed a minimum of one year of approved, appropriate graduate training.

❏ A Georgia Merit System employee who has a classification rating of psychologist, senior psychologist, or psychology program specialist.

Evaluations will be completed according to the Georgia Department of Education Timeline requirements. Webster County Schools will ensure:

❏ All previous information and data on the student is reviewed (e.g., previous evaluations, medical reports, psychological evaluations, and independent evaluations). This helps the team determine which evaluations to administer for the current evaluation.

❏ To use a variety of evaluation tools and strategies to gather relevant academic, functional, and developmental information about the child, including information provided by the parents that may assist in determining: 1. Whether the child is a child with a disability, and 2. The content of the child's individualized education program includes information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum (or for a preschool child to participate in appropriate activities).

❏ Not to use any single procedure as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child.

❏ Will use the most current technically sound instruments, which may assess the relevant contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors

❏ Will select assessments and other evaluation materials based on the following criteria: 1. Are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis; 2. Are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer; 3. Are used for purposes for which the evaluations or measures are valid and reliable; 4. Are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and 5. Are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments.

❏ Will identify additional data needed to fulfill the comprehensive evaluation requirements of evaluating the whole student.

Evaluations must be completed within 60 calendar days of receiving parental consent for evaluation. Holiday periods and other circumstances when children are not in attendance for five consecutive days may not be counted toward the 60 calendar day timeline.

Once the comprehensive psychological evaluation is complete, a copy will be sent to the special education director and assigned to the appropriate special education teacher. The school psychologist and the special education teacher will schedule an IEP Team meeting to address eligibility and the IEP.

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR EVALUATIONS AND REEVALUATIONS

❏ Professional learning is ongoing throughout the year with MTSS teams and special education teachers concerning the evaluation and reevaluation process. After the initial professional learning of the year, special education staff are required to read the special education procedure guide and sign the verification form that they have read and understand the process for evaluations. Administrators are provided professional learning at principals' meetings and RTI teams are also trained.

❏ The Director of Special Education will use a checklist to review MTSS data, ensure the use of evidence and research-based interventions is used with fidelity, and provide feedback regarding readiness for referral for evaluation based on intervention implementation.

❏ Once the IEP/MTSS team determines an evaluation is necessary, a referral for evaluation form is submitted to the special education office. A parent consent for evaluation packet is sent home by the special education office. Information is documented in the evaluation log maintained by the Director of Special Education to ensure that the 60-day timelines are met.

❏ Monthly timelines are reviewed by the Director of Special Education to ensure compliance.

❏ Monthly reports are provided to the Special Education Director regarding student evaluations by Chattahoochee Flint RESA.

❏ During the monitoring process, if a school is deemed in need of assistance, additional training will be provided to the school SST team, administrators, and special education teachers.

PRESCHOOL COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION

Children may be referred by parents, school personnel, local pediatricians, private speech/language pathologists, audiologists, parents, and/or staff from private preschools or daycares, Head Start, Pre-K, Health Department, Family and Children's Services, and Early Intervention/Babies Can't Wait.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-step approach to provide services and interventions to students, including preschool-age children who struggle with learning, behavior, and/or speech. Once a referral is made to the Webster County Pre-school Director, the early intervention teacher or BCW school coordinator will observe the student, talk to the parent or individual making the referral, and make recommendations for interventions based on the needs of the child. The school-designated interventionist or the individual making the referral will be responsible for implementing the interventions. The preschool RTI team will progress monitor the effectiveness of the interventions.

If the child is transitioning from Babies Can't Wait (BCW), a transition meeting will be held prior to the child's third birthday. A referral can be made during this meeting.

Once a decision is made to refer the child for an evaluation, the parent will be provided a copy of Parent Rights and a list of evaluation instruments that may be used. The parent must sign Consent for Evaluation before the evaluation process may begin. The evaluation will be arranged by the RTI team. The parent will provide a copy of the child's birth certificate, proof of immunization, proof of residency, and a Social Security card. A vision and hearing screener will be completed by the school system at this time, as well as a play-based developmental assessment, which includes the 5 developmental areas of cognition, communication, fine and gross motor, adaptive and personal/social, and a speech evaluation if needed. This process must be completed no later than 60 calendar days. Holiday periods and other circumstances when children are not in attendance for five consecutive days may not be counted toward the 60 calendar day timeline. If the Consent for Evaluation is received 30 days prior to the end of school, the evaluation must be conducted within 90 calendar days. After the evaluation, an Eligibility/IEP Team meeting will be scheduled with the family to discuss the findings and to make recommendations. The parent, special education teacher, regular education teacher, school psychologist, and an LEA rep will participate in these meetings.

At the Eligibility/IEP Team meeting, results of the evaluation will be discussed, and eligibility will be determined. If the child is eligible, then goals and objectives will be developed based on the child's significant deficits. Once the Consent for Placement is obtained, the child will begin to

receive services. This process must be completed by a child's third birthday if it is a Babies Can't Wait referral.

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR BCW PROCEDURES

❏ Professional learning is ongoing throughout the year with pre-school RTI and primary school RTI teams, including pre-school special education teachers. After the initial professional learning of the year, special education staff are required to read the special education procedure guide and sign the verification form that they have read and understand the process for evaluations. Administrators are provided professional learning at principals' meetings and RTI teams are also trained.

❏ The compliance team will meet monthly to ensure implementation of professional learning.

❏ The early intervention preschool teacher will serve as an evaluation examiner for early intervention referrals.

❏ Monthly, the BCW school coordinator will communicate with the BCW regional coordinator to monitor and plan for upcoming referrals.

❏ Monthly, the BCW school coordinator will submit an Early Intervention Timeline Log to the Director of Special Education to ensure that timelines are met. The Early Intervention Timeline Log will document referrals, meetings, and evaluations.

❏ The BCW school coordinator will work directly with the early intervention special education teacher and the BCW regional coordinator to schedule BCW referral meetings prior to the student's third birthday.

❏ The BCW school coordinator and the early intervention special education teacher will set up an evaluation date with the family and the regional BCW coordinator.

❏ The Special Education Director monitors the process monthly directly with BCW school coordinator to ensure the following: 1) completion of evaluation, 2) completion of appropriate documents, and 3) Eligibility meetings scheduled prior to the student's third birthday.

❏ During the monitoring process, if a school is deemed in need of assistance,e additional training will be provided to the school SST team, administrators, and special education teachers.

DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY

Students aged three through twenty-one years of age may be determined eligible for twelve Special Education categories. This section includes the Georgia Department of Education Special Education Regulations and local procedures relating to placement of students in Special Education programs. Every student placed in Special Education must first be determined eligible for services by an Individual Education Program (IEP) Team.

ELIGIBILITY TEAM

The team may consist of the parent(s), a Regular Education Teacher, a person knowledgeable of the evaluation results, a Special Education Teacher, Local Education Agency (LEA) Representative, the student (when appropriate), and any other individuals invited at the discretion of the parent or school system. Parent(s) must inform the school of any individual they are inviting to the meeting in order to add the person(s) to the meeting invitation. If determined eligible, the IEP Team will identify goals and objectives to meet the student's needs in the least restrictive environment.

DOCUMENTATION OF ELIGIBILITY RESULTS

Webster County Schools will provide a copy of the comprehensive psychological evaluation report and documentation of the determination of eligibility (eligibility report) at no cost to the parents.

EXCLUSIONARY FACTORS

In making a determination of eligibility, a child must not be determined to be a child with a disability if: the determinant factor for that eligibility is lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction; lack of appropriate math instruction; or limited English proficiency; has a visual, hearing, or motor disability, has an intellectual disability, for specific cultural factors, has an environmental or economic disadvantage, has an atypical education history (lack of attendance) or if the child does not otherwise meet the program area eligibility criteria for a child with a disability.

DETERMINATION OF THE DISABILITY AND NEED FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION (DISMISSAL)

For all dismissals from Special Education services, there must be a review of data indicating that the child is not a child with a disability. This must include a re-evaluation determination form. All students must have a comprehensive evaluation and eligibility meeting to determine eligibility.

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION AND CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBILITY STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.05

A child or youth from 3 through 21 years of age is considered to have a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) if the child or youth meets the eligibility criteria in any of the following areas and needs special education and related services.

CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBILITY

AUTISM

Autism spectrum disorder is a developmental disability generally evident before age three that adversely affects a child's educational performance and significantly affects developmental rates

and sequences, verbal and non-verbal communication, and social interaction and participation. Other characteristics often associated with autism spectrum disorder are unusual responses to sensory experiences, engagement in repetitive activities and stereotypical movements, and resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines. Autism does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance as defined in (d). Children with autism spectrum disorder vary widely in their abilities and behavior.

The following evaluations and assessments may be utilized to determine the presence of the characteristics of autism spectrum disorder.

❏ Comprehensive psychological evaluation to include a formal assessment of intellectual functioning and an assessment of adaptive behavior.

❏ Educational evaluation to include an assessment of educational performance and current functioning levels.

❏ Communication evaluation to include assessment of verbal and non-verbal communication, prosody (linguistics including intonation, rhythm, and focus in speech), and pragmatic language utilizing both formal and informal measures.

❏ Behavioral evaluations are to include assessment of social interaction and participation, peer and adult interactions, capacity to relate to others, stereotypical behaviors, resistance to change, atypical responses to sensory stimuli, persistent preoccupation with or attachment to objects, and other behaviors often associated with autism spectrum disorder.

❏ Developmental history to include developmental differences and delays, and age of onset, which is typically before the age of three. A child may be diagnosed as a child with autism spectrum disorder after age three if the characteristics of autism spectrum disorder are met.

Five Characteristics of Autism:

❏ Developmental rates and sequences

❏ Social interaction and participation

❏ Communication (verbal and/or nonverbal)

❏ Sensory processing

❏ Repertoire of activities and interests.

DEAF-BLIND

Deafblind means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

For a child to be determined eligible for placement in special programs for the deafblind, the child may have a current optometric or ophthalmological examination and an audiological evaluation, all administered by qualified professionals. Children who are deafblind may have an audiological evaluation administered by a certified/licensed audiologist annually or more often if needed. The annual audiological evaluation may include, but is not limited to: an otoscopic inspection, unaided and aided pure tone and speech audiometry (as applicable), immittance testing, word recognition, hearing aid check and electro-acoustic analysis of the hearing aid (if amplified), and an analysis of a frequency modulated (FM) system check (if utilized). A comprehensive written report is required, indicating the dates of the audiological evaluation and a description of the results of the audiological testing and amplification evaluation. In addition, the report should include a description of classroom environmental modifications which will assist the individualized education program (IEP) team in making instructional decisions, the child's ability to understand spoken language with and without amplification, and an interpretation of the results as they apply to the child in his or her classroom setting.

DEAF/HARD OF HEARING (D/HH)

A child who is deaf or hard of hearing is one who exhibits a hearing loss that, whether permanent or fluctuating, interferes with the acquisition or maintenance of auditory skills necessary for the normal development of speech, language, and academic achievement and, therefore, adversely affects a child's educational performance.

1. A child who is deaf can be characterized by the absence of enough measurable hearing (usually a pure tone average of 66-90+ decibels, American National Standards Institute, without amplification) such that the primary sensory input for communication may be other than the auditory channel.

2. A child who is hard of hearing can be characterized by the absence of enough measurable hearing (usually a pure tone average range of 30-65 decibels American National Standards Institute without amplification) that the ability to communicate is adversely affected; however, the child who is hard of hearing typically relies upon the auditory channel as the primary sensory input for communication.

The eligibility report may include audiological, otological, and educational evaluation reports.

(a) Audiological evaluations may be provided with initial referral. Children who are deaf or hard of hearing may have an audiological evaluation administered by a certified/licensed audiologist annually, or more often if needed. The annual audiological evaluation may include, but is not limited to: an otoscopic inspection, unaided and aided pure tone and speech audiometry (as applicable), immittance testing, word recognition, hearing aid check and electro-acoustic

analysis of the hearing aid (if amplified), an analysis of a frequency modulated (FM) system check (if utilized). A comprehensive written report may be included in the audiological evaluation. This written report may include, but is not limited to: the date of the audiological evaluation, description of the results of the audiological testing, an amplification evaluation including the child's ability to understand spoken language with and without amplification, as well an interpretation of the results as they apply to the child in his or her classroom setting.

(b) An otological evaluation report from appropriately licensed or certified personnel is required at the time of initial placement in the program for the deaf/hard of hearing. The otological evaluation report is required as medical history pertinent to the absence of hearing. If such a report is not available upon initial placement, it may be obtained within 90 days of placement. The initial or most recent otological evaluation result may be summarized, and that otological evaluation report may be attached to the eligibility report.

(c) A comprehensive educational assessment may be used in the development of the child's individualized education program (IEP). The educational evaluation may include assessment data from more than one measure and may include, but is not limited to, information related to academic/achievement levels, receptive and expressive language abilities, receptive and expressive communication abilities, social and emotional adjustment and observational data relative to the child's overall classroom performance and functioning.

A psychological evaluation, using instruments appropriate for children who are deaf or hard of hearing, is recommended as part of the overall data when eligibility is being considered.

Children who exhibit a unilateral hearing loss may be considered for eligibility, provided documentation exists that indicates academic or communicative deficits are the result of the hearing loss.

EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDER

An emotional and behavioral disorder is an emotional disability characterized by the following:

1. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and/or teachers. For preschool-age children, this would include other care providers.

2. An inability to learn that cannot be adequately explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.

3. A consistent or chronic inappropriate type of behavior or feelings under normal conditions.

4. A displayed pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

5. A displayed tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains, or unreasonable fears associated with personal or school problems.

A child with EBD is a child who exhibits one or more of the above emotionally based characteristics of sufficient duration, frequency, and intensity that interfere significantly with educational performance to the degree that provision of special educational services is necessary. EBD is an emotional disorder characterized by excesses, deficits, or disturbances of behavior. The child's difficulty is emotionally based and cannot be adequately explained by intellectual, cultural, sensory, general health factors, or other additional exclusionary factors.

1. A child may be considered for placement in a program for children with EBD based upon an eligibility report that may include the following:

❏ Documentation of comprehensive prior extension of services available in the regular program to include counseling, modifications of the regular program, or alternative placement available to all children, and data-based progress monitoring of the results of interventions

❏ Psychological and educational evaluations

❏ Report of behavioral observations over a significant period of time;

❏ Appropriate social history to include information regarding the history of the child's current problem(s), the professional services and interventions that have been considered or provided from outside the school, and

❏ Adequate documentation and written analysis of the duration, frequency, and intensity of one or more of the characteristics of emotional and behavioral disorders.

2. A child must not be determined to be a child with an Emotional and Behavioral Disorder if the primary factor for that determination is:

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction;

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in math;

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in writing;

❏ Limited English proficiency;

❏ Visual, hearing, or motor disability;

❏ Intellectual disabilities;

❏ Cultural factors;

❏ Environmental or economic disadvantage; or

❏ Atypical education history (multiple school attendance, lack of attendance, etc.).

3. The term does not include children with social maladjustment unless it is determined that they are also children with EBD. A child whose values and/or behavior conflict with the school, home, or community, or who has been adjudicated through the courts or other involvement with correctional agencies, is neither automatically eligible for nor excluded from EBD placement. Classroom behavior problems and social problems, e.g., delinquency and drug abuse, or a diagnosis of conduct disorder, do not automatically fulfill the requirements for eligibility for placement.

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Intellectual disabilities refer to significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, which exists concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior that adversely affect educational performance and originates before age 18. Intellectual disability does not include conditions primarily due to a sensory or physical impairment, traumatic brain injury, autism spectrum disorders, severe multiple impairments, cultural influences, or a history of inconsistent and/or inadequate educational programming.

1) Significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning is defined as approximately 70 IQ or below as measured by a qualified psychological examiner on individually administered, nationally normed standardized measures of intelligence.

2) Deficits in adaptive behavior are defined as significant limitations in a child's

effectiveness in meeting the standards of maturation, learning, personal independence, or social responsibility, and especially school performance that is expected of the individual's age-level and cultural group, as determined by clinical judgment.

3) Deficits in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior must have existed prior to age 18.

4) A child must not be determined to be a child with an Intellectual Disability if the determining factor for that determination is:

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction;

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in math;

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in written expression;

❏ Limited English proficiency;

❏ Visual, hearing, or motor disability;

❏ Emotional disturbances;

❏ Cultural factors;

❏ Environmental or economic disadvantage; or

❑ Atypical educational history (multiple school attendance, lack of attendance, etc.).

A child may be classified as having an intellectual disability (at one of the levels listed below) when a comprehensive evaluation indicates deficits in both intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. Intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior may be considered equally in any determination that a child is eligible for services in the area of intellectual disability. A comprehensive educational evaluation may be administered to determine present levels of academic functioning. The report may be prepared for each child to provide an adequate description of the data collected and explicit pre-referral interventions prior to evaluation, and to explain why the child is eligible for services in a program for children with intellectual disabilities. In situations where discrepancies exist between test score results from intellectual functioning, adaptive behavior, and academic achievement, the eligibility report must contain a statement of specific factors considered that resulted in the decision of the eligibility team. Eligibility teams must establish that any limits in performance are not primarily due to the exclusionary factors and must document this in the eligibility report.

A child may be classified as having an intellectual disability at one of the levels listed below:

MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (MID)

(1) Intellectual functioning ranging between an upper limit of approximately 70 to a lower limit of approximately 55; and

(2) Deficits in adaptive behavior that significantly limit a child's effectiveness in

meeting the standards of maturation, learning, personal independence, or social responsibility, and especially school performance that is expected of the individual's age level and cultural group, as determined by clinical judgment.

MODERATE INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (MOID)

(1) Intellectual functioning ranging from an upper limit of approximately 55 to a lower limit of approximately 40; and

(2) Deficits in adaptive behavior that significantly limit a child's effectiveness in

meeting the standards of maturation, learning, personal independence, or social responsibility, and especially school performance that is expected of the individual's age-level and cultural group as determined by clinical judgment.

SEVERE INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (SID)

(1) Intellectual functioning ranging from an upper limit of approximately 40 to a lower limit of approximately 25; and

(2) Deficits in adaptive behavior that significantly limit a child's effectiveness in

meeting the standards of maturation, learning, personal independence, or social responsibility, and especially school performance that is expected of the individual’s age-level and cultural group as determined by clinical judgment.

PROFOUND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY (PID)

(1) Intellectual functioning below approximately 25; and

(2) Deficits in adaptive behavior that significantly limit a child’s effectiveness in

meeting the standards of maturation, learning, personal independence,e or social responsibility, and especially school performance that is expected of the child's age-level and cultural group, as determined by clinical judgment.

ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENT (OI)

Orthopedic impairment refers to a child whose severe orthopedic impairments adversely affect their educational performance to the degree that the child requires special education.

This term may include:

(1) Impairment caused by congenital anomalies, e.g., deformity or absence of some limb.

(2) Impairment caused by disease (poliomyelitis, osteogenesis imperfecta, muscular dystrophy, bone tuberculosis, etc.)

(3) Impairment from other causes, e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures.

Secondary disabilities may be present, including, but not limited to, visual impairment, hearing impairment, communication impairment, and/or intellectual disability.

Evaluation for initial eligibility may include the following.

(1) A current medical evaluation from a licensed doctor of medicine. The evaluation report used for initial eligibility may be current within one year. The evaluation may indicate the diagnosis/prognosis of the child's orthopedic impairment, along with information as applicable regarding medications, surgeries, special health care procedures, and special diet or activity restrictions.

(2) A comprehensive educational assessment to indicate the adverse effects of the orthopedic impairment on the child's educational performance.

(3) Assessments may document deficits in: pre-academic or academic functioning, social/emotional development, adaptive behavior, motor development, or communication abilities resulting from the orthopedic impairment. When assessment information indicates significant deficit(s) in cognitive/academic functioning, a psychological evaluation may be given.

Children served in a program for orthopedic impairments should be functioning no lower than the criteria outlined for mild intellectual disabilities programs. For those children with orthopedic impairments served in other special education programs due to the severity of their sensory or intellectual disability, support by the OI teacher regarding the implications of the child's orthopedic impairment may be appropriate.

OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT (OHI)

Other health impairment means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment that -

(1) Is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit

disorder or attention-deficient hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, or heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette Syndrome, and

(2) Adversely affects a child's educational performance.

In some cases, heightened awareness of environmental stimulus results in difficulties with starting, staying on, and completing tasks; making transitions between tasks; interacting with others; following directions; producing work consistently; and organizing multi-step tasks.

Evaluation for initial eligibility may include the following:

(a) The medical evaluation from a licensed doctor of medicine, or in the case of ADD and ADHD, an evaluation by a licensed doctor of medicine or licensed clinical psychologist, should be considered by the child's Eligibility Team as part of the process of determining eligibility. The evaluation report may indicate the diagnosis/prognosis of the child's health impairment, along with information as applicable regarding medications, special health care procedures, and special diet or activity restrictions. The evaluation report used for initial eligibility may be current within one year and must document the impact of the physical condition on the vitality, alertness, or strength of the child. In cases of illness where the child's physical health and well-being are subject to deterioration or change, this report may be updated as frequently as determined by the IEP Committee. A medical diagnosis does not automatically include or exclude a child from the determination of eligibility.

(b) A comprehensive developmental or educational assessment to indicate the effects of the health impairment on the child's educational performance. Assessments may document deficits in pre-academic or academic functioning, adaptive behavior, social/emotional development, and motor or communication skills resulting from the health impairment. When assessment information indicates significant deficits in cognitive/academic functioning, a psychological evaluation may be given.

(c) A child must not be determined to be a child with Other Health Impairment if the determining factor for that determination is:

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction;

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in math;

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in writing;

❏ Limited English proficiency;

❏ Visual, hearing, or motor disability;

❏ Intellectual disabilities;

❏ Emotional disturbances;

❏ Cultural factors;

❏ Environmental or economic disadvantage; or

❏ Atypical educational history (attendance at multiple schools, lack of attendance)

SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY (SDD)

The term significant developmental delay refers to a delay in a child's development in adaptive behavior, cognition, communication, motor development, or emotional development to the extent that, if not provided with special intervention, the delay may adversely affect a child's educational performance in age-appropriate activities. The term does not apply to children who are experiencing a slight or temporary lag in one or more areas of development or a delay that is primarily due to environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage or lack of experience in age-appropriate activities. The SDD eligibility may be used for children from ages three through nine (the end of the school year in which the child turns nine)

(1) Initial eligibility must be established, and an IEP must be in place on or before the child's seventh birthday. SDD eligibility is determined by assessing a child in each of the five skill areas of adaptive development: cognition, communication, physical development (gross and fine motor), and social/emotional development. Any child who scores at least 2 standard deviations below the mean in one or more of the five areas or 1½ standard deviations below the mean in two or more areas may meet eligibility for SDD.

(2) For children who are kindergarten age or older, initial eligibility may also include documented evidence that the impact on educational performance is not due to:

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in reading or literacy readiness, including the essential components of reading instruction;

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in math or math readiness skills

❏ Limited English proficiency;

❏ Visual, hearing, or motor disability

❏ Emotional disturbances;

❏ Cultural factors, or

❏ Environmental or economic disadvantage.

The application of professional judgment is a critical element at every stage of eligibility determination: as test instruments are selected, during the evaluation process, in the analysis of evaluation results, as well as the analysis of error patterns on standardized, teacher-made, or other tests.

(3) All five skill areas may be assessed using at least one formal assessment. In those areas in which a significant delay is suspected, at least one additional formal assessment must be utilized to determine the extent of the delay. All formal assessments must be age-appropriate, and all scores must be given in standard deviations.

(4) For children eligible under SDD with hearing, visual, communication, or orthopedic impairments, a complete evaluation must be obtained to determine if the child also meets eligibility criteria for deaf/hard of hearing, visual impairments, speech and language impairments, or orthopedic impairments. Students with sensory, physical, or communication disabilities must receive services appropriate for their needs, whether or not specific eligibility is determined.

(1) Preschool-aged (3-5) children meeting eligibility criteria as SDD and needing special education services may receive those services in a variety of placement options, as determined by the child's IEP Team and participation by other agencies, such as, but not limited to:

❏ Regular Early Childhood Setting;

❏ Head Start Programs

❏ Georgia Pre-K Class

❏ Community Daycares

❏ Private Preschools

❏ Separate Early Childhood Special Education Setting;

❏ Day School;

❏ Residential Facility;

❏ Service Provider Location: or

❏ Home

(2) School-aged children with SDD may be served by any appropriately certified teacher in any education program designed to meet the needs of the child, as specified by the child's IEP team.

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES (SLD)

(1) Specific learning disability is defined as a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not apply to children who have learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, intellectual disabilities, emotional or behavioral disorders, environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

(2) The child with a specific learning disability has one or more serious academic deficiencies and does not achieve adequately according to age to meet State-approved grade-level standards. These achievement deficiencies must be directly related to a pervasive processing deficit and to the child's response to scientific, research-based interventions. The nature of the deficit(s) is such that classroom performance is not correctable without specialized techniques that are fundamentally different from those provided by general education teachers, basic remedial/tutorial approaches, or other compensatory programs. This is clearly documented by the child's response to instruction as demonstrated by a review of the progress monitoring available in general education and Student Support Team (SST) intervention plans, as supported by work samples and classroom observations. The child's need for academic support alone is not sufficient for eligibility and does not override the other established requirements for determining eligibility.

Exclusionary Factors

(1) A child must not be determined to be a child with a specific learning disability if the determining factor for that determination is:

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension)

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in math

❏ Lack of appropriate instruction in writing;

❏ Limited English proficiency;

❏ Visual, hearing, or motor disability;

❏ Intellectual disabilities;

❏ Emotional disturbances;

❏ Cultural factors;

❏ Environmental or economic disadvantage; or

❏ Atypical educational history (such as irregular school attendance or attendance at multiple schools)

Required Data Collection

(1) In order to determine the existence of Specific Learning Disability, the group must summarize the multiple sources of evidence to conclude that the child exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, State-approved grade level standards, and intellectual development. Ultimately, specific learning disability is determined through professional judgment using multiple supporting evidence that must include:

(a) Data are collected that include:

❏ At least two current (within twelve months) assessments, such as the results of the CRCT or other state-required assessment, norm-referenced achievement tests, or benchmarks indicating performance that does not meet expectations for State-approved grade-level standards;

❏ Information from the teacher related to routine classroom instruction and monitoring of the child's performance. The report must document the child's academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty.

❏ Results from supplementary instruction that has been or is being provided: that uses scientific, research or evidence based interventions selected to correct or reduce the problem(s) the student is having and was in the identified areas of concern; such instruction has been implemented as designed for the period of time indicated by the instructional strategy(ies). If the instructional strategies do not indicate a period of time the strategies should be implemented, the instructional strategies may be implemented for a minimum of 12 weeks to show the instructional strategies' effect or lack of effect that demonstrates the child is not making sufficient progress to meet age or State-approved grade-level standards within a reasonable time frame;

❏ The interventions used and the data-based progress monitoring results are presented to the parents at regular intervals throughout the interventions.

❏ Any educationally relevant medical findings that would impact achievement.

❏ After consent is received from the parents for a comprehensive evaluation for special education determination, the following must occur:

a. An observation by a required group member.
b. Documentation that the determination is not primarily due to any of the exclusionary factors;
c. Current analyzed classroom work samples indicate below-level performance as compared to the classroom normative sample; and

d. Documentation of a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance and/or achievement in relation to age and grade level standards must include:

❏ A comprehensive assessment of intellectual development is designed to assess specific measures of processing skills that may contribute to the area of academic weakness. This assessment must be current within twelve months and

❏ Current Response to Intervention data-based documentation indicates the lack of sufficient progress toward the attainment of age or State-approved grade-level standards.

❏ As appropriate, a language assessment as part of additional processing batteries may be included.

Eligibility Determination

(1) The child who is eligible for services under the category of specific learning

disability must exhibit the following characteristics: a primary deficit in basic psychological processes and secondary underachievement in one or more of the eight areas, along with documentation of the lack of response to instructional intervention as supported by ongoing progress monitoring.

(2) Deficits in basic psychological processes typically include problems in attending, discrimination/perception, organization, short-term memory, long-term memory, conceptualization/reasoning, executive functioning, processing speed, and phonological deficits. Once a deficit in basic psychological processes is documented, there may be evidence that the processing deficit has impaired the child's mastery of the academic tasks required in the regular curriculum. Though there may exist a pattern of strengths and weaknesses, evidence must be included documenting that the processing deficits are relevant to the child's academic underachievement as determined by appropriate assessments that are provided to the child in his/her native language. Though a child may be performing below age or State-approved grade level standards, the results of progress monitoring must indicate that the child is not making the expected progress toward established benchmarks. This is indicated by comparing the child's rate of progress toward attainment of grade-level standards.

(3) Underachievement exists when the child exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, State-approved grade level standards, and intellectual development, and when a child does not achieve adequately toward attainment of grade level standards in one or more of the following areas:

❏ Oral expression- use of spoken language to communicate ideas

❏ Listening comprehension- ability to understand spoken language at a level commensurate with the child's age and ability levels.

❏ Written expression - ability to communicate ideas effectively in writing with appropriate language;

❏ Basic reading skills- ability to use sound/symbol associations to learn phonics in order to comprehend the text;

❏ Reading comprehension- ability to understand the meaning of written language based in the child's native language;

❏ Reading Fluency Skills- the ability to read and process a text with an appropriate rate and accuracy;

❏ Mathematics calculation-ability to process numerical symbols to derive results, including, but not limited to, spatial awareness of symbol placement and choice of sequence algorithms for operations required; and

❏ Mathematical problem-solving ability to understand logical relationships between mathematical concepts and operations, including, but not limited to, correct sequencing and spatial/symbolic representation.

(4) Progress monitoring includes the data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting the child's progress during instruction. When reviewing progress monitoring data, those students who exhibit a positive response to the research-validated instruction being provided by general education cannot be considered as having a specific learning disability, even though they may show deficits on achievement tests in the specified areas. In addition, children whose achievement in classroom academics indicates performance that is commensurate with pervasive weaknesses that are not indicative of a pattern of strengths and weaknesses may not be considered as having a specific learning disability.

(5) One group member responsible for determining specific learning disability must conduct an observation of the child's academic performance in the regular classroom after the child has been referred for an evaluation, and parental consent for special education evaluation is obtained. The observation of the child is conducted in the learning environment, including the regular classroom setting, to document the child's academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty. The observation must include information from the routine classroom instruction and monitoring of the child's performance.

THE SLD ELIGIBILITY GROUP

(1) The determination of whether a child suspected of having a specific learning

disability is a child with a disability must be made by the child's parents and a team of qualified professionals that must include.

❏ The child's regular teacher, or if the child does not have a regular teacher, a regular classroom teacher qualified to teach a child of his or her age;

❏ A highly qualified certified special education teacher; and

❏ A minimum of one other professional qualified to conduct individual diagnostic assessments in the areas of speech and language, academic achievement, intellectual development, or social-emotional development, and interpret assessment and intervention data (such as a school psychologist, reading teacher, or educational therapist). The determination of the required group members should be based on the data being reviewed and the child's individual needs.

(2) Each group member must certify in writing whether the report reflects the member's conclusions. If it does not reflect the member's conclusion, the group member must submit a separate statement presenting the member's conclusions.

SPEECH-LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT (SI)

Speech or language impairment refers to a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language, or voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. A speech or language impairment may be congenital or acquired. It refers to impairments in the areas of articulation, fluency, voice, or language. Individuals may demonstrate one or any combination of speech or language impairments. A speech or language impairment may be a primary disability, or it may be secondary to other disabilities.

(1) Speech Sound Production Impairment (e.g., articulation impairment)- atypical production of speech sounds characterized by substitutions, omissions, additions, or distortions that interfere with intelligibility in conversational speech and obstructs learning and successful verbal communication in the educational setting. The term may include the atypical production of speech sounds resulting from phonology, motor, or other issues. The term speech sound impairment does not include:

❏ Inconsistent or situational errors;

❏ Communication problems primarily from regional, dialectic, and/or cultural differences;

❏ Speech sound errors at or above age level according to established research-based developmental norms, speech that is intelligible, and without documented evidence of adverse effect on educational performance

❏ Physical structures (e.g., missing teeth, unrepaired cleft lip and/or palate) are the primary cause of the speech sound impairment; or

❏ Children who exhibit tongue thrust behavior without an associated speech sound impairment.

(2) Language Impairment - impaired comprehension and/or use of spoken language, which may also impair written and/or other symbol systems, and is negatively impacting the child's ability to participate in the classroom environment. The impairment may involve, in any combination, the form of language (phonology, morphology, and syntax), the content of language (semantics), and/or the use of language in communication (pragmatics) that is adversely affecting the child's educational performance. The term language impairment does not include:

❏ Children who are in the normal stages of second language acquisition/learning and whose communication problems result from English being a secondary language, unless it is also determined that they have a speech language impairment in their native/primary language.

❏ Children who have regional, dialectal, and/or cultural differences

❏ Children who have auditory processing disorders, not accompanied by language impairment.

❏ Children who have anxiety disorders (e.g., selective mutism), unless it is also determined that they have a speech language impairment. There must be a documented speech-language impairment that adversely affects the educational performance of these children to qualify for special education services.

(3) Fluency Impairment - interruption in the flow of speech characterized by an atypical rate, or rhythm, and/or repetitions in sounds, syllables, words, and phrases that significantly reduce the speaker's ability to participate within the learning environment. Excessive tension, struggling behaviors, and secondary characteristics may accompany fluency impairments. Secondary characteristics are defined as ritualistic behaviors or movements that accompany dysfluencies. Ritualistic behaviors may include avoidance of specific sounds in words. Fluency impairment includes disorders such as stuttering and cluttering. It does not include dysfluencies evident in only one setting or reported by one observer.

(4) Voice/Resonance Impairment – interruption in one or more processes of pitch, quality, intensity, or resonance resonation that significantly reduces the speaker's ability to communicate effectively.. Voice/Resonance impairment includes aphonia or the abnormal production of vocal quality, pitch, loudness, resonance, and/or duration, which is inappropriate for an individual's age and/or gender. The term voice/resonance impairment does not refer to

❏ Anxiety disorders (e.g., selective mutism)

❏ Differences that are the direct result of regional, dialectic, and/or cultural differences

❏ Differences related to medical issues not directly related to the vocal mechanism (e.g., laryngitis, allergies, asthma, laryngopharyngeal reflux eg, acid reflux of the throat, colds, abnormal tonsils or adenoids, short-term vocal abuse or misuse, neurological pathology)

❏ Vocal impairments that are found to be the direct result of or a symptom of a medical condition, unless the impairment impacts the child's performance in the educational environment and is amenable to improvement with therapeutic intervention.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI)

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) refers to an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects the child's educational performance. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments which are immediate or delayed in one or more areas, such as cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem solving, sensory, perceptual and motor abilities, psychosocial behavior, physical

functions, speech and information processing. The term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative in nature or brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

(1) Evaluation for eligibility may include the following.

❏ A summary of the child's pre-injury functioning status. This information may be available through previous formal evaluations, developmental assessments, achievement tests, classroom observations, and/or grade reports.

❏ Verification of the TBI through the following.

❏ A medical evaluation report from a licensed doctor of medicine indicating that TBI has occurred recently or in the past, or

❏ Documentation of TBI from another appropriate source, such as the health department or social services reports, or parents' medical bills/records.

❏ A neuropsychological, psychological, or psychoeducational evaluation that addresses the impact of the TBI on the following areas of functioning:

❏ Cognitive - This includes areas such as memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem-solving, speed of information processing, cognitive endurance, organization, receptive and expressive language, and speed of language recall.

❏ Social/Behavioral - This includes areas such as awareness of self and others, interaction with others, response to social rules, emotional responses to everyday situations, and adaptive behavior.

❏ Physical/Motor: This includes areas such as hearing and vision acuity, speech production, eye-hand coordination, mobility, and physical endurance.

(2) Deficits in one or more of the above areas that have resulted from the TBI and

adversely affect the child's educational performance may be documented.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT (VI)

A child with a visual impairment is one whose vision, even with correction, adversely impacts a child’s educational performance. Examples are children whose visual impairments may result from congenital defects, eye diseases, or injuries to the eye. The term includes both visual impairment and blindness as follows:

❏ Blind refers to a child whose visual acuity is 20/200 or less in the better eye after correction or who has a limitation in the field of vision that subtends an angle of 20 degrees. Some children who are legally blind have useful vision and may read print.

❏ Visually impaired refers to a child whose visual acuity falls within the range of 20/70 to 20/200 in the better eye after correction or who has a limitation in the field of vision that adversely impacts educational progress.

Progressive visual disorders: Children whose current visual acuity is greater than 20/70 but who have a medically indicated expectation of visual deterioration may be considered for vision-impaired eligibility based on documentation of the visual deterioration from the child's optometrist or ophthalmologist.

(1) A current (within one year) eye examination report may be completed and signed by the ophthalmologist or optometrist who examined the child.

❏ A report from a neurologist in lieu of the optometrist/ophthalmologist report is acceptable for students who have blindness due to a cortical vision impairment.

(2) A clinical low vision evaluation may be completed by a low vision optometrist for children who are not totally blind;

❏ If the student is under the age of 8 and/or has a severe cognitive and/or physical disability that would make the use of low vision aids unfeasible, a functional vision evaluation may be used instead of a low vision evaluation to establish eligibility

❏ The low vision evaluation should be completed by age 10 for children who do not have one during eligibility determination prior to age 8 unless other circumstances apply.

❏ The low vision evaluation is often difficult to schedule within the 60-day timeline; therefore, if children meet all other eligibility requirements, the eligibility report may document the date of the scheduled upcoming low vision evaluation, and the team may proceed with the eligibility decision.

❏ Once the low vision evaluation has occurred, the eligibility information may be updated, and as appropriate, the IEP.

The low vision evaluation must occur within 120 days of receipt of parental consent to evaluate to determine eligibility for visual impairment.

(3) A comprehensive education evaluation may be administered to determine present levels of functioning. The impact of the visual impairment on the child's educational performance may be considered for eligibility.

(4) Braille instruction is always considered critical to appropriate education for a child who is blind. Children identified with visual impairments may be evaluated to determine the need for Braille skills. The evaluation will include the present and future needs for Braille instruction or the use of Braille. For children for whom braille instruction and use are indicated, the individualized education program (IEP) may include the following

❏ Results obtained from the evaluation conducted for the purpose of determining the need for Braille skills.;

❏ How instruction in braille will be implemented as the primary mode for learning through integration with other classroom activities.

❏ Date on which the braille instruction will commence.

❏ The length of the period of instruction and the frequency and duration of each instructional session; and

❏ The level of competency in Braille reading and writing to be achieved by the end of the period, and the objective assessment measures to be used.

❏ For those children for whom Braille instruction is not indicated, the IEP may include a statement with supporting documentation that indicate the absence of Braille instruction will not impair the child's ability to read and write effectively.

DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY BY ELIGIBILITY TEAM

Upon completion of the administration of assessments and other measures, a group of qualified professionals and the parents of the child, the eligibility team, will determine whether the child is a child with a disability and the educational needs of the child. The team will consist of the parent(s), a Regular Education Teacher, a qualified professional knowledgeable of the evaluation results, a Special Education Teacher, Local Education Agency (LEA) Representative, the student (when appropriate), and any other individuals invited at the discretion of the parent or school system (as needed).

DOCUMENTATION OF ELIGIBILITY / INELIGIBILITY

An eligibility report that documents the area of disability may be completed and added to the child's special education record. The eligibility report may provide statements for each component of the eligibility and may be comprehensive enough and use a variety of appropriate sources to serve as the evaluation report when necessary. For those children determined not eligible for special education and related services, the eligibility report may clearly explain the Eligibility Team's determination. The parent of the child may receive a copy of the eligibility report at no cost to the parent.

ELIGIBILITY AND INITIAL PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

1. Eligibility Report Completed – The Eligibility Report is the documentation that verifies if the student is or is not eligible for special education services. The student's case manager or evaluator will initiate the eligibility report. An IEP team meeting to determine eligibility is required for all disability areas. It is the responsibility of the Lead Special Education teacher and School Psychologist to make sure these meetings are scheduled and completed within the timeline guidelines. The eligibility report and determination will be provided to the parents.
2. Notice of Meeting – Attempts should be made to contact the parent by phone to agree upon a date and time for the meeting. The parents must be notified of the proposed date, time, and location of an IEP meeting to give them sufficient time to make arrangements to attend or contact the school to reschedule the meeting. The parents are sent the original notice form regarding the meeting date and time, as well as the purpose of this meeting. The school system must give the parents every opportunity for

a convenient, mutually agreed-upon meeting time as well as the option to reschedule so that the parents may attend. Further information about the Notice of Meeting may be found in the IEP section of this manual.

3. Individualized Education Program (IEP) Developed – An annual IEP is required for each student who is served in Special Education. The IEP is developed to meet the special needs of the student as identified by the assessments, observations, and other data collected during the referral process. The IEP is developed after the student is determined eligible for services. See the IEP section for more information on the development of the IEP.
4. IEP Team Meeting – The IEP Team Meeting provides an opportunity for all parties involved in the education of a student to meet to determine eligibility as well as discuss appropriate options to meet the individual education needs of that student. Team members must include the parent, a LEA representative, not less than one special education teacher, not less than one regular education teacher, and other individuals at the discretion of the parent or the LEA who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate. If the student is found to meet eligibility for a special education program, the Team may or may not recommend placement in that program. If the student does not meet eligibility for a special education program, regular education options should be discussed, and the student will be referred to the SST team for follow-up (see MTSS manual for directions).
5. Parental Consent for Placement – Should the IEP Team recommend a student be placed in any special education program, a Parental Consent for Services must be signed before services can be initiated. If the parent is present at the meeting, the parent's signature will be obtained at the conclusion of the meeting. If the parent is not present, the Special Education teacher or designee will attempt to contact the parent to schedule another meeting or make arrangements for the parent to sign the form. If this cannot be accomplished, the school social worker may be contacted to help secure the consent. Once the Parental Consent is obtained, services may be initiated.

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR ELIGIBILITY

❏ Professional learning is ongoing throughout the year with SST teams and special education teachers concerning the evaluation and reevaluation process. After the initial professional learning of the year, special education staff are required to read the special education procedure guide and sign the verification form that they have read and understand the process for evaluations. Administrators are provided professional learning at principals' meetings and RTI teams are also trained.

❏ The compliance team will meet monthly to ensure the implementation of professional learning.

❏ The Director of Special Education will use a checklist to review RTI progress monitoring data, ensure the use of evidence and research-based interventions to fidelity, and provide feedback to the RTI team regarding readiness for special education referral for evaluation.

❏ When a student is to be referred for an evaluation or reevaluation, the Referral for Evaluation form is sent to the special education office. The special education office will send the evaluation packet home to get Parental Consent to Evaluate. Information is documented on the evaluation log maintained by the Director of Special Education.

❏ Once an evaluation or a reevaluation is complete, the eligibility team, led by the Director of Special Education or a Compliance Team Member, will use the guidelines developed by the District, State, and Federal Programs to ensure the team's eligibility determinations meet state and federal guidelines.

❏ The director of Special Education will monitor the success of the SST process by monitoring the placement rate for initial referrals to special education twice annually.

❏ The director of Special Education and the School Psychologist will use a checklist to monitor eligibility paperwork for compliance. Meeting biweekly to address updates and concerns.

❏ If a school is identified as needing technical assistance, additional professional learning will occur with that school team.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS
STATE RULE: 160-4-7.13

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES REFERRED OR PLACED IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS BY LEA

If the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, including the parent, decides that the most appropriate placement for a student is in a private school, the district that places the student in the private school continues to be responsible for making sure that the student receives the special education and related services included in the student's IEP and that those services are provided at no cost to the parent. The district should make sure that the education provided at the private school meets the standards that apply to other students with disabilities and that the student and parent continue to have all the same rights that other students with disabilities and their parents have. A district representative must visit the private school at least annually. Ultimately, the district remains responsible for ensuring free, appropriate public education (FAPE) when the student is placed in the private school. The IEP team, with all of the appropriate members, including the parent, private school or facility staff, and district representative, will develop the IEP for the child. IEP team members may participate in the meeting through a conference call or other means. The district will ensure that the parent can attend at no cost to the parent. Districts may apply for grant funds if the child is placed in a private school or facility that is approved by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). If the private school is out of the state, it must be on the approved list of the state where the school is located.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES PLACED IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS BY PARENTS AND LEA OFFER OF FAPE

If the Webster County Schools made a free appropriate public education (FAPE) available to a child and the child's parents elect to place the child in a private school or facility, Webster County Schools is not required to pay for the cost of the education, including special education and related services, for the child at the private school or facility; however, proportionate share services will be made available to eligible students.

PROVISION OF WRITTEN NOTICE BY A PARENT TO PLACE IN PRIVATE SCHOOL

At least 10 business days prior to the removal of the child from the LEA, the parents must give written notice to the LEA that they are rejecting the placement proposed by the LEA to provide a FAPE to the child and state their concerns or their intent to enroll the child in a private school at public expense.

REIMBURSEMENT AND LIMITATIONS OF REIMBURSEMENT

If the parents of a child with a disability, who previously received special education and related services in a LEA, enroll the child in a private preschool, elementary school or secondary school without the consent of or referral by the LEA, a court or an administrative law judge (A LJ) may or may not require the LEA to reimburse the parents for the cost of that enrollment if the court or ALJ finds that the LEA had not made a FAPE available to the child in a timely manner prior to that enrollment and that the private placement is appropriate. A parental placement may be found to be appropriate by an ALJ or a court even if it does not meet the state standards that apply to education provided by the State or LEA.

The cost of reimbursement described above may be reduced or denied if: At the most recent IEP Team meeting that the parents attended prior to the removal of the child from the LEA, the parents did not inform the IEP Team that they were rejecting the placement proposed by the LEA to provide a FAPE to their child and did not state their concerns or their intent to enroll the child in a private school at public expense; or At least 10 business days prior to the removal of the child from the LEA, the parents did not give written notice to the LEA that they were rejecting the placement proposed by the LEA to provide a FAPE to the child and did not state their concerns or their intent to enroll the child in a private school at public expense. If, prior to the parent's removal of the child from the LEA, the LEA informed the parents through the notice requirements of its intent to evaluate the child, including a statement of the purpose and scope of the evaluation that was appropriate and reasonable, but the parents did not make the child available for evaluation; or upon a judicial finding of unreasonableness with respect to actions taken by the parents.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES ENROLLED BY THEIR PARENTS IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Children who are home-schooled within the boundaries of the district are considered parentally-placed private school children for the purposes of special education.

CHILD FIND PROCESS AND CHILDREN IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Webster County Schools may locate, identify, and evaluate all private schools children with disabilities (including out-of-state students) enrolled by their parents in private, including religious, elementary, and secondary schools located in the LEA in accordance with Child Find activities described in Rule 160-4-7-.03 The Child Find activities utilized to comply with this requirement must be comparable to activities undertaken for children with disabilities enrolled in the LEA. Public notification must be given before any significant Child Find activities are implemented. The Special Education Director will provide annual public notification in the following print and electronic sources:

❏ Webster County Schools Website: Websterbobcats.org

❏ Local Newspaper

❏ Child-Find Letter distributed to local health department, physician offices, and social media sources.

*Note: Currently, there are no private schools within Webster County; should a private school open, appropriate notification will be provided.

PART B AND RELATED SERVICES FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS

To the extent consistent with their number and location in the state, provisions must be made for the participation of private school children with disabilities in programs provided under Part B of the IDEA by providing children with special education and related services.

PROVISION OF IEPS AND SERVICE PLANS TO PRIVATE PLACED STUDENTS

A Services Plan will be developed and implemented for each private school child with disabilities who will receive services from the district. Webster County Schools will initiate and conduct the meetings to develop, review, and revise a services plan. It will ensure that a representative of the private school attends each meeting. As with IEPs, in-person participation in the meeting is encouraged, but participation may be through conference call or other means. A services plan must contain a statement of the special education and related services, and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child; be in effect at the beginning of each school year; and be developed, reviewed, and revised annually. GO-IEP will be utilized to develop a service plan.

CONSULTATION WITH PRIVATE SCHOOLS FOR CHILD COUNT AND PRIVATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATION AT IEP MEETINGS

Webster County Schools may ensure that the child count is conducted each year. The child count may be used to determine the amount Webster County must spend on providing special education and related services to private school children with disabilities in the following fiscal year. To ensure timely and meaningful consultation, the LEA must consult with private school representatives and representatives of parents of parentally-placed private school children with

disabilities during the design and development of special education and related services for the children.

EQUITABLE SERVICES DETERMINED AND LIMITATIONS

No parentally-placed private school child with a disability has an individual right to receive some or all of the special education and related services that the child would receive if enrolled in the district. The district only has an obligation to provide these children an opportunity for equitable participation in the services funded with Federal Part B dollars that the district has determined, after consultation, to make available to its population of parentally-placed private school children with disabilities. These children with disabilities may receive different amounts of services than children in public schools. Some children will not receive any services.

MATERIALS PROVISION: SECULAR, NEUTRAL, AND NON-IDEOLOGICAL

The district may provide materials, which may be secular, neutral, or non-ideological, equipment, and property purchased to implement the services to the children with disabilities in the private school, but these must be used only for those purposes and must be returned when no longer needed. No funds may be used for repairs, minor remodeling, or construction of private school facilities. The district may not use the IDEA Part B flow-through or federal preschool funds to finance the existing level of instruction in a private school, the needs of the private school, or the general needs of the children in the private school.

LOCATIONS OF SERVICES AND TRANSPORTATION

Services provided to private school children with disabilities may be provided on site at the child's private school, including a religious school, to the extent consistent with the law. If it is necessary for the child to benefit from or participate in the services provided under his or her services plan, the private school children with disabilities must be provided transportation. Transportation services can be provided from the services site to the private school or to the child’s home, depending on the timing of the services. From the child’s school or home to a site other than the private school. LEAs are not required to provide transportation from the child’s home to the private school.

PROVISION OF PROPERTY, EQUIPMENT, AND SUPPLIES TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS

The LEA must control and administer the funds used to provide special education and related services and hold title to and administer materials, equipment, and property purchased with those funds. The LEA may place equipment and supplies in a private school for the period of time needed for the program. The LEA must ensure that the equipment and supplies placed in a private school are used only for special education purposes and can be removed from the private school without remodeling the private school facility. The LEA may remove equipment and supplies from a private school if they are no longer needed for special education purposes or the removal is necessary to avoid their unauthorized use for purposes other than special education purposes. No funds under IDEA Part B may be used for repairs, minor remodeling, or construction of private school facilities.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WHO ATTEND PRIVATE SCHOOL IN WEBSTER COUNTY BUT ARE NOT WEBSTER COUNTY RESIDENTS

Currently, Webster County does not have private schools located within the county. Should a private school develop in Webster County, the following will be true. If the child does not live in Webster County but attends a private school in Webster County, the county will evaluate the child, and the Eligibility Team will determine eligibility. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the eligibility status to the system of residence. The system of residence is responsible for offering services, not the Webster County School System. If the student attending a private school in Webster County is found eligible for equitable services and if there are proportionate share funds available, then a Service Plan can be developed for the equitable services as determined through the consultation meeting.

AREA OF GENERAL SUPERVISION II: SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)
STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.07

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

The least restrictive environment is the term used to describe the right for a child with a disability to remain with his or her peers without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate for his or her education. Each child is different, and the IEP Team determines the setting for special education services to be delivered. A child should remain in the regular classroom with special education and related services provided in the regular classroom unless there is evidence that this environment is not successful, even with supports and services. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular class environment may occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

WEBSTER COUNTY LRE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

In determining the least restrictive environment, the IEP committee will meet annually and determine placement using the following decision-making process.

❏ Document current levels of performance
❏ Develop Student IEP Goals
❏ Determine whether the goal can be taught in the general education class with accommodations and modifications and/or personal supports.
❏ If necessary, determine the alternative placement where those goals that cannot be taught in a general classroom can be taught.
❏ Determine additional settings or activities that will provide opportunities for interaction with nondisabled peers
❏ Determine placement in the LRE
❏ Evaluate the student's performance on goals and objectives.

ANNUAL IEP PLACEMENT DETERMINATION

In determining the educational placement of a child with a disability, including a preschool child with a disability, Webster County Schools must ensure that the placement decision is made by a group of persons, including the parents, and other persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options. The child's placement is determined at least annually and is based on the child's IEP.

FULL CONTINUUM OF ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENTS

Webster County Schools must ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services. The IEP team may not make placement decisions based only on the category of the student's disability, the severity of the disability, the placement options currently available, the availability of educational or related services, space available, or administrative convenience. Webster County provides provisions for supplementary aids, services, and supports such as resource rooms or specialized instruction in small groups and/or instruction from itinerant teachers who provide services in several schools. The continuum of alternative placements includes:

❏ General education classes, with needed supplementary aids and services
❏ A special class where all children in the class receive special education services for some or all of the day
❏ A special school
❏ Home
❏ A hospital or other institution
❏ Residential Placement

LOCATION OF SERVICES

The child's placement is determined at least annually and is based on the child's IEP. Placement will also be provided as close as possible to the child's home. Unless the IEP of a child with a disability requires some other arrangement, the child is educated in the school that he or she would attend if nondisabled.

PRESCHOOL PLACEMENTS AND SERVICES

A variety of placement options are available for preschool students with disabilities. The IEP team should consider the full continuum of options when making the placement decision for a preschool child with a disability. Options include:

❏ Participation in general early childhood programs in the public school or in the community, Head Start, Bright from the Start Pre-Kindergarten, public or private child care/day care, and preschool programs

❏ Placement in a separate special education program housed in the public school or in a community-based setting;
❏ Placement in a separate school or residential facility, if necessary;
❏ Services in the home as the natural environment for a young child;
❏ Services at the office of a service provider; or
❏ A combination of the above, based on the child's IEP

SCHOOL-AGE PLACEMENTS AND SERVICES

A continuum of placements will be considered by the IEP team for school-aged students with disabilities and must include the following:

❏ Support in general education settings
❏ Support services
❏ Personnel support from paraprofessionals, interpreters, or others
❏ Support from itinerant teachers
❏ Direct special education services
❏ Consultative services
❏ Collaborative services
❏ Co-teaching services
❏ Instruction outside of the general classroom for individuals or small groups
❏ Support from an itinerant teacher
❏ Other Placement Options
❏ Self-contained special education classrooms
❏ Special education pull-out classes
❏ Special schools
❏ Private schools
❏ Home instruction
❏ Hospital/homebound
❏ Residential services

Consultative services involve special education or related service providers consulting with the classroom teacher and working directly with the student for at least one class period a month. Collaborative or co-teaching services call for special education or related service providers to collaborate in the general classroom with the classroom teacher for a portion of a class period or for the full class period.

NON-ACADEMIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR SETTINGS

Least restrictive environment requirements also apply to nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities such as meals, recess periods, sports participation, participation in clubs, and field trips. Students with disabilities are to participate with their nondisabled peers in these kinds of activities to the maximum extent appropriate based on the child's needs. The IEP team decides what supplementary aids and services are appropriate and necessary for the student to participate in these activities.

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR LRE

❏ Professional learning is ongoing throughout the year with school administrators, SST teams, and special education teachers. After the initial professional learning of the year, special education staff are required to read the Special Education Procedure Guide and sign off on the Verification form that they have read and understand the process for child find.
❏ Administrators are provided professional learning at principals' meetings and RTI teams are also trained.
❏ If documentation shows that a school is in need of technical assistance, additional training is provided.

DISCIPLINE
STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.10

DISCIPLINE

The Webster County School System follows state rules and has developed the Webster County Code of Student Conduct. The Code of Student Conduct is provided to each student at the beginning of each school year or when he/she enroll in our school system. All students are expected to know and follow the rules. Parents and students are expected to return a signed document indicating they have received, read, discussed, and understood all rules included in the Code of Conduct.

The code of student conduct may apply to all children unless a child's individualized education program (IEP) specifically provides otherwise. The LEA may ensure that the parents and the child with a disability receive notice of the rules and regulations applicable to children with disabilities with respect to child management, discipline, and suspension/expulsion upon the child's entry into a special education program or at the annual IEP review.

School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether a change in placement, consistent with the other requirements of this Rule, is appropriate for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct. In most cases, discipline for students with disabilities is no different than discipline for other students.

Disciplinary information contained in this section pertains to all students with disabilities in any category of eligibility who violates the Code of Student Conduct.

INTERIM ALTERNATIVE SETTINGS AND 10 DAY RULE

School personnel may remove a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct from his or her current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting or suspension, for not more than 10 consecutive school days (to the extent those alternatives are applied to children without disabilities), and for additional removals of not more than 10 consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of

misconduct (as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement under this Rule).

There are some occasions where the IEP may afford some protection. One protection includes the right to continuation of services indicated by the IEP if the student is removed (expelled) from school for more than 10 cumulative days within a school year. This protection is extended due to the requirement for FAPE. In addition to the right to continue special education services, students with disabilities may receive alternative consequences depending on the violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days in the same school year, during any subsequent days of removal, the LEA must provide services to the extent required under this Rule.

For disciplinary changes in placement that would exceed 10 consecutive school days, if the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the school code is determined not to be a manifestation of the child's disability under this Rule, school personnel may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to children without disabilities.

A child with a disability who is removed from his or her current placement for more than 10 consecutive school days must :

1. Continue to receive educational services, as provided in Rule 160-4-7- .02 Free and Appropriate Public Education, so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general educational curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress towards meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and

2. Receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications as set forth in the behavioral intervention plan and IEP, where appropriate, that are designed to address the behavior violation so it does not recur.

3. The LEA is only required to provide services during periods of removal to a child with a disability who has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days or less in that school year, if services are provided to a child without disabilities who has been similarly removed.

4. After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days in the same school year, if the current removal is not for more than 10 consecutive school days and is not a change in placement because of disciplinary removals, school personnel, in consultation with at least one of the child's teachers, determine the extent to which services are needed in order to provide a free, appropriate public education, so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress towards meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP.

5. If the removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days or is a change in placement because of disciplinary removals, the child's IEP Team determines appropriate services needed in order to provide a free, appropriate public education, so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress towards meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP.

6. The services required in (e) may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the LEA, the parent, and the relevant members of the child's IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the LEA) must review all relevant information in the child's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine :

1. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the Child's disability; or

2. If the conduct in question was the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP. The conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the LEA, the parent and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or the conduct in question was the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP. If the LEA, the parent, and the relevant members of the child's IEP Team determines the conduct in question was a direct result of the failure of the LEA to implement the IEP, the LEA must take immediate steps to remedy those deficiencies.

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT / BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN

If the LEA, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team must either:

1. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless the LEA had conducted a functional behavioral assessment before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child; or

2. If a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior, and return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the LEA agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

School personnel may remove a child to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, if the child :

❏ Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State or the LEA;
❏ Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or to a school function under the jurisdiction of the State or the LEA; or
❏ Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State or the LEA.

NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE OF PLACEMENT

On the date on which the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the LEA must notify the parents of that decision, and provide the parents with the procedural safeguards notice described in Rule 160-4-7-.09

APPEAL PROCESS

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement or the manifestation determination under this Rule, or an LEA that believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others, may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing. The hearing is requested by filing a due process hearing request pursuant to Rule 160-4-7- .12 Dispute Resolution.

An administrative law judge or hearing officer under Rule 160-4-7-.12 Dispute Resolution hears the facts and makes a determination regarding an appeal regarding the disagreement above.

In making a determination under this Rule, the administrative law judge or hearing officer may:

- ❏ Return the child with a disability to the placement from which the child was removed if the administrative law judge or hearing officer determines that the removal was a violation of this rule or that the child's behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability; or
- ❏ Order a change of placement of the child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if the administrative law judge or hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

These appeal procedures may be repeated if the LEA believes that returning the child to the original placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

EXPEDITED DUE PROCESS HEARING:

The State is responsible for arranging the expedited due process hearing, which must occur within 20 school days of the date the complaint requesting the hearing is filed. The administrative law judge or hearing officer must make a determination within 10 school days after the hearing.

Unless the parents and LEA agree in writing to waive the resolution meeting, Dispute Resolution, or agree to use the mediation process described in the same Rule:
❏ A resolution meeting must occur within seven days of receiving notice of the due process hearing request/complaint; and
❏ The due process hearing may proceed unless the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties within 15 days of the receipt of the due process hearing request/complaint.
❏ The decisions on expedited due process hearings are appealable.

PLACEMENT DURING APPEALS

When an appeal under this Rule has been made by either the parent or the LEA, the child must remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the administrative law judge or hearing officer or until the expiration of the 45 school day time period provided for in this Rule, section 5, Special Circumstances, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the LEA agree otherwise.

PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN NOT YET ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES [34 C.F.R. § 300.534 (a)]

A child who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violated a code of student conduct, may assert any of the protections provided for in this Rule if the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred (as determined in accordance with this Rule):

> ❏ An LEA must have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred
> ❏ The parent of the child expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the appropriate educational agency or a teacher of the child that the child is in need of special education and related services;
> ❏ The parent of the child requested an evaluation of the child pursuant to Rule 160-4-7-.04 Eligibility Determinations and Criteria; or
> ❏ The teacher of the child or other personnel of the LEA expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the director of special education of the LEA or to other supervisory personnel of the LEA.

An LEA would not be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if the parent of the child has not allowed an evaluation of the child or has refused services or the child

has been evaluated and determined not to be a child with a disability as described in Rule 160-4-7- .04 Eligibility Determinations and Criteria.

If an LEA does not have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, the child may be subjected to the disciplinary measures applied to children without disabilities who engaged in comparable behaviors. If a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner. The evaluation will be completed within 60 days of the receipt of permission to evaluate. The school psychologist or contracted psychologist will complete the evaluation. School personnel who work directly with the student or who are required members of an eligibility team, administration, and parents will have access to the results of the evaluation. Until the evaluation is completed, the child remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services. If the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by the agency and the information provided by the parents, the agency must provide special education and related services.

REFERRAL TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AND JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES

There is nothing in the Discipline Rule that prohibits the LEA from reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities or prevents State law enforcement or judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of Federal and State law to crimes committed by a child with a disability. [34 C.F.R. § 300.535 (a)]

In the event that a student with a disability commits a crime, the administrator of the school must be contacted immediately. The administrator will refer to the School Resource Officer (SRO) so that the proper steps can be taken according to the law. The Special Education Director should be contacted immediately as well. This will ensure that a manifestation determination meeting can be scheduled as quickly as possible if necessary.

A LEA reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability must ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the child are transmitted for consideration by the appropriate authorities to whom the agency reports the crime. The school in which the crime occurred is responsible for providing records to authorities. [34C .F .R. § 300 .535(b)(1)]

A LEA reporting a crime under this Rule may transmit copies of the child's special education and disciplinary records only to the extent that the transmission is permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. [34 C .F .R. § 300 .535(b)(2)]

CHANGE OF PLACEMENT BECAUSE OF DISCIPLINARY REMOVALS

For purposes of removals of a child with a disability from the child's current educational placement under this Rule, a change in placement occurs if:

1. The removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days, or

2. The child has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern -
    - ❏ Because the series of removals totals more than 10 school days in a school year;
    - ❏ Because the child's behavior is substantially similar to the child's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals, and;
    - ❏ Because of such additional factors as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.
    - ❏ The LEA determines on a case-by-case basis whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change of placement.

This determination is subject to review through due process hearings and judicial proceedings.

WEBSTER COUNTY DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

When a student is removed from school for 10 cumulative days, the IEP committee will hold a meeting called a Manifestation Determination before the 11th day of suspension according to Georgia State Rules. The Special Education Director must be invited to ALL manifestation meetings. This type of meeting must be held any time a student with a disability is under consideration for a "change of placement" due to his/her misconduct. During the Manifestation Determination, the IEP committee will determine if the violation of the code of student conduct was substantially related to or caused by the student's disability. The IEP team will also review the student's IEP and BIP and make amendments as deemed necessary. The IEP Team makes the decision as to whether the school system implemented the student's IEP/BIP correctly.

If the IEP Team determines that the student's misconduct was not substantially related to the student's disability and that the IEP and BIP were properly implemented, then the student is subject to the same disciplinary actions as other general education students. The only difference would be the continuation of special education services during the time the student is out of school.

If the IEP Team determines that the student's misconduct is a manifestation of the student's disability then the student must be returned to the placement from which he was removed, unless: (1) incident involves weapons or drug possession or infliction of serious bodily injury; or (2) the parent and the district agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the student's behavioral intervention plan.

General Information:

- ❏ Change of Placement
    - ❏ OSS for more than 10 days
    - ❏ A series of removals that constitute a pattern
- ❏ In-School Suspension (ISS)

- ❏ Students must continue to have access to the general curriculum and to progress toward the goals in the IEP in order for ISS not to be considered a removal from school and not counted toward the 10 days of suspension.

❏ Case managers are responsible for providing a copy of the BIP to all administrators.
❏ Administrator(s) responsible for discipline should monitor the days of removal for students with disabilities.
❏ Case managers should monitor the discipline of students on their caseload.

MONITORING OSS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS IS IMPORTANT AND IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY!

Defining “Removal from School”
❏ Bus Suspension – will count as a removal from school if one of the following is met and the student does not attend school:

- ❏ Transportation is a related service in the IEP
- ❏ If the student has no alternate way to get to school

❏ In-School Suspension (ISS) – ISS counts as “removal” if the student does not receive special education services indicated in the IEP and access to the general curriculum.

❏ Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)

- ❏ OSS does count as “removal” from school
- ❏ When a student has been removed for 10 school days, the building administrator and/or the case manager must contact the Special Education Director to set up a manifestation meeting prior to the 11th day for continuation of services.
- ❏ IEP Team reviews FBA/amends BIP

Defining “Change of Placement”

❏ System personnel may take into account all the circumstances when deciding if a change in placement is the right action to take for a student with a disability.
❏ System personnel may consider various forms of information when considering a change of placement, such as the following.

- ❏ Student’s disciplinary history
- ❏ Ability to understand the consequences
- ❏ Expression of remorse
- ❏ Supports that were provided to the student prior to the behavior violation

❏ Removal for MORE than 10 days

- ❏ When a student is removed from school for more than 10 days, this is considered to be a “change of placement.”
- ❏ Notify parents and provide parental rights
- ❏ The school system is responsible for the student’s educational progress, so IEP services must be continued.

Serious Violations (weapons, drugs, or inflicting serious bodily injury on another person)

❏ Serious behavior problems can result in removal to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting for up to 45 days.
❏ This can happen even if the conduct is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability.
❏ Removing the student for these offenses does not require parent consent or agreement, nor does it require a tribunal hearing.
❏ In these cases, system administrators must notify the parent immediately and provide the Parental Rights.

SUPERVISION AND MONITORING FOR DISCIPLINE

❏ At the beginning of each school year, administrators and special education teachers receive professional learning on discipline and SWD. After the initial professional learning, administrators and special education staff are required to read The Special Education Procedure Guide and sign off on the verification form that they have read and understand the process of disciplining a student with disabilities.
❏ At the beginning of each school year, administrators are provided a list of special education students and a copy of the BIP as appropriate for each SWD.
❏ Special Education students are flagged in our student records program, PowerSchool, so that when an administrator is disciplining a student, it is easy to determine if they have an IEP.
❏ Lead Teachers will monitor student discipline reports biweekly to ensure no special education student is having disciplinary problems.
❏ The case manager will intervene with appropriate behavior interventions as necessary.
❏ Administrators will review discipline reports to determine the effectiveness of rules and regulations for SWD. Administrators will communicate with Special Education teachers as needed.
❏ School administrators will review behavioral data weekly in PowerSchool discipline logs.
❏ Administrators will contact the Director of Special Education with questions related to discipline and SWD.
❏ The Director of Special Education will communicate with Special Education teachers and monitor inappropriate student behavior, and provide feedback to stakeholders.
❏ If a school is identified in this process of needing technical assistance, additional professional learning will be provided.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)
STATE RULE 160-4-7-.06

IEP

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) must be developed for every student identified as a student with a disability who is or will be receiving special education services. This IEP becomes an important document that ensures the student is provided free, appropriate public educational services based on his/her special needs. The IEP is not a binding contract, for which the school

system is responsible if the student does not achieve the growth projected in the goals and objectives. However, it assures that the school system will provide the special education and related services as outlined in the IEP. Additionally, any change in special education and/or related services for a student must be documented in the IEP.

IEP TEAM

The IEP team is a group of individuals that is responsible for developing, reviewing, or revising an IEP for a child with a disability. Webster County Schools may ensure that each IEP team meeting includes required participants.

The IEP team for each student with a disability includes:
❏ The parents of the student;
❏ At least one regular education teacher of the student;
❏ At least one special education teacher of the student;
❏ A representative of the public agency (LEA) who:
❏ Is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child with disabilities;
❏ Is knowledgeable about the general curriculum; and
❏ Is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the public agency;
❏ An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the IEP team

At the discretion of the parent or the agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student, including related services personnel as appropriate, the student with a disability, when appropriate, can also be members of the IEP team.

CONTENT OF THE IEP

❏ A statement of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance and how the disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum, or for preschool children in appropriate activities;
❏ A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals and short-term instructional objectives;
❏ A statement of specific special educational and related services to be provided to the student and the extent to which the student will be able to participate in the regular educational programs;
❏ An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class;
❏ Accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the child on state and district-wide assessments;
❏ Dates for initiation of services and anticipated duration of the services;
❏ Anticipated frequency, location, and duration of these services;
❏ Appropriate objective criteria, evaluation procedures, and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short-term instructional objectives are being achieved;

❏ Transition Services – for each student with a disability entering 9th grade or at age 16 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team), and updated annually, appropriate measurable postsecondary goals and a statement of the transition service needs of the student under the applicable components of the student's IEP that focuses on the student's course of study (such as participation in advanced-placement courses or a vocational education program

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Webster County Schools must take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents of a child with a disability are present at each IEP Team meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate. This includes notifying the parent early enough, scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed upon time and place. The notice must have the purpose, time, and location of the meeting.

WEBSTER COUNTY PROCEDURES: REQUIRED SECTIONS OF THE IEP

PARENT PARTICIPATION NOTIFICATIONS OF MEETINGS

The parent must be notified of the proposed date, time, and location of an IEP meeting to give sufficient time to make arrangements to attend or contact the school to reschedule the meeting. The notice should include the purpose of the meeting (including transition, if appropriate); the proposed date, time, and location of the meeting; and the people who have been invited to the meeting. The parent may request to reschedule the IEP meeting or to participate virtually or by telephone if attending in person is not possible.

❏ Notification must be given 7-10 calendar days prior to the meeting.

❏ A minimum of three attempts must be made to involve a parent. One attempt must be a written notice. Attempts may include:

- ❏ Telephone (including text message, in which the parent responds)
- ❏ Notice sent through email
- ❏ Notice sent in the mail
- ❏ Notice sent with the student
- ❏ Home visit
- ❏ Parent liaison or school social worker visit
- ❏ Certified Mail

After three attempts to contact the parent have been made, the meeting may proceed without parental attendance. If three contacts have been made and a response is given stating that the parent will attend, you may proceed with the meeting with or without parents in attendance. If a parent requests to reschedule the meeting, you may not proceed without them. The meeting must be rescheduled. If the parent reschedules the meeting and three contacts have been made, and the parent fails to attend, you may proceed with the meeting with or without parents in attendance.

EXCUSAL OF IEP TEAM MEMBER

There are two circumstances in which a required member of the IEP Team may be excused:
❏ When an IEP Team member's area of curriculum or related services is NOT being changed or discussed at the meeting, the parent and the system may agree to excuse the team member from all or part of the meeting if the parent consents in writing to this excusal; or
❏ When the IEP Team member's area of curriculum or related services is being discussed at the meeting, the parent and the system may excuse an IEP Team member from all or part of a meeting if the parent consents in writing to the excusal and the person submits relevant written input to the IEP Team prior to the meeting.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Participants to be included in the IEP meeting are the IEP Team, and all team members should be established:
❏ Parents of the child or a surrogate parent if the child is a ward of the state
❏ At least one regular education teacher of the child;
❏ At least one special education teacher of the child;
❏ A representative of the school system, LEA Representative
❏ Speech Therapist, if needed
❏ Related Service providers (OT, PT), if needed
❏ Student
❏ Any other appropriate personnel

DEVELOPING THE IEP

A. When beginning the IEP meeting:
❏ Review the purpose of the meeting
❏ Introduce all team members
❏ Review Parental Rights
❏ Discuss the reason for referral, if appropriate

B. In a successful IEP meeting:
❏ Decisions are documented
❏ There is a clear understanding of who is responsible for designated tasks
❏ All team members are active participants
❏ Team members are positive, open, and honest

C. IEP background information
❏ Student and Guardian demographics should be verified by identifying information with the parent, and update this information with the registrar if new information is given. Only registrars have the rights to update personal information. Case managers can update student profiles in GO with updated information as needed.

D. Eligibility date and Exceptionality classifications:

❏ The eligibility date is the INITIAL eligibility date. This date will not change unless the exceptionality changes. Re-evaluation date is the CURRENT eligibility date and must be within the last 3 years. Do not include future dates.
❏ Do not forget to include all areas of exceptionality as documented on the eligibility report.

E. Parent Participation
❏ Parent participation must be documented on the Notice of IEP Meeting, Meeting Attendance Form, and the IEP team member listed on the IEP.

PRESENT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Present Levels is the basis for the development of the entire IEP, including the Transition Plan, Goals/Objectives, Behavior Intervention Plan, and the Classroom and State Assessment Accommodations. The Present Levels should include academic, developmental, and functional performance. It should be specific and individualized. Weaknesses in the present levels should tie directly to the IEP goals and objectives.

ASSESSMENTS AND IDENTIFIED NEEDS (ACADEMIC, FUNCTIONAL, DEVELOPMENTAL)

Present Levels must include the most recent state assessment and system-level assessment results. This should not just be a listing of state scores or grades, but rather an explanation of the results. Pertinent formal or informal testing data should be included along with an explanation of the information that better defines the current levels of the student. This information will help in linking goals and objectives that may need to be developed for the student. Information from the most recent psychological evaluation should always be included.

Present Levels must include statements identifying the student's academic, developmental, and/or functional strengths and weaknesses. In addition, each identified area of significant deficit should be addressed in the annual goals, short-term objectives, and special education and related services.

EFFECT OF THE DISABILITY

A discussion of the impact of the disability on involvement and progress in the general education curriculum or for preschool in appropriate activities must be included. This must include characteristics of the disability. Sample impact statements include:
❏"Sally's deficits in auditory processing make it difficult for her to understand verbal instructions and directions. She requires written directions and frequent checks for understanding."
❏"Sally frequently cries, yells, and refuses to work when she doesn't understand a new concept or assignment. Once upset, she requires time away from instruction to calm down, resulting in many interruptions to her learning. When new lessons or assignments are being presented, Sally needs extra time with a teacher to ensure she understands the material before working independently."

PARENTAL CONCERNS

Present Levels must include parental input, whether the parent is present at the meeting or not. The parental input may be from a previous discussion with the parent during the school year. Additional parental input may also be included in the minutes of the IEP.

CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL FACTORS

All Special Factor Considerations must be addressed with statements written where needed.
❏ The Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) must be completed for students with EBD eligibility. In the case of a child whose behavior impedes the child's learning or that of others, consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies to address that behavior in the IEP or behavioral intervention plan.
❏ Limited English Proficiency- the case of a child with limited English proficiency, consider the language needs of the child as those needs relate to the child's IEP
❏ Blind/Visual Impairment-In the case of a child who is blind or visually impaired, provide for instruction in Braille and the use of Braille unless the IEP Team determines, after an evaluation of the child's reading and writing skills, needs and appropriate reading and writing media, that instruction or the use of Braille is not appropriate for the child.
❏ Communication Needs-Consider the communication needs of the child, and in the case of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the child's language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the child's language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the child's language and communication mode;
❏ Deaf/Hard of Hearing
❏ Assistive Technology Devices or Services – Consider whether the child needs assistive technology devices and services, and document yes or no in a statement.
❏ Alternative Format for Instruction

MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS & SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES

In the last reauthorization of IDEA and the latest Georgia State Regulations, short-term objectives are not required for all students in special education. Only those students who participate in the Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA) are required to have short-term objectives. However, there is nothing that prohibits a system from requiring short-term objectives or benchmarks for all special education students. Webster County's current policy requires annual goals for all students. Webster County requires short-term objectives only for students participating in GAA. See the IEP Compliance Modules or PowerPoint for additional examples and support in writing this section.

CRITERIA FOR MEASUREMENT OF GOALS/ OBJECTIVES

When writing goals/objectives, please remember the following:
❏ Must be skill building- what skills does the student need to develop to access, participate, and make progress in the general curriculum and school activities?

❏ Must contain a target behavior, condition, and criteria of measurement (writing clear and measurable present level of performance makes writing clear and measurable goals easier).
❏ Precise verbs must be used when writing goals.
❏ Must have a data collection strategy that supports the measurability of the goal.
Example: Given a set of 10 single-digit addition problems, Sally will correctly add within numbers (0-10) to achieve 80% accuracy in 3 out of 4 trials as measured by weekly math fact assessments.

Measurable annual goals are written to address an individual student's deficits to enable that student to make progress in grade-level standards. All students are expected to be working toward grade-level standards, so it is not appropriate to write grade-level standards as goals in the IEP.

PROGRESS REPORTING AND SCHEDULE

The IEP must provide how the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured, and when periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals will be provided to parents. Case managers will be required to maintain a detailed record of progress monitoring scores for each IEP goal throughout each 9-week monitoring period. Webster County will provide progress reports using GO-IEP every 9 weeks to parents. The 9-week progress reporting period will be generated from the start date of the IEP. Case managers are responsible for monitoring due dates for IEP progress reports using the GO-IEP dashboard. The special education director will also monitor the GO-IEP dashboard to ensure teachers are completing reports in a timely manner.

PLAN FOR SERVICES

The IEP must provide the projected date for the beginning of the services, program modifications, and anticipated frequency, location, and duration for special education and related services, modifications/ accommodations, and positive behavioral supports.
❏ Services in General Education is a Special Education service inside the general education setting. These services may include: Consultation, Supportive Instruction (Para-pro), Collaborative, and Co-Teaching.
❏ Services in the Special Education setting include Resource and Self-Contained (both are considered small group instruction on the IEP)
❏ Related Services are services that are required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education and access the general curriculum. Some of these services include: Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT), Special Transportation, and School Health Services.

CONSIDERATION OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

The IEP team must consider the student's need for assistive technology. Assistive technology (AT) devices are identified in the IDEA 2004 as: Any item, piece of equipment, or product

system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of children with disabilities.
The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted or the replacement of such a device.

AT support is provided through the Director of Special Education and the therapist. All AT devices must be included in the IEP.

EXPLANATION FOR EXCLUSION OF PARTICIPATION WITH NON-DISABLED PEERS EXPLANATION

All options considered should be discussed and documented in the IEP. Once the options are decided upon, a WHY statement should be included, which describes the extent to which the student will not participate with peers without disabilities in the regular class and/or nonacademic and extracurricular activities. Sample statements include:
❏ Billy will receive supplemental instruction in reading one segment per day outside the general education setting to address deficits in reading fluency and comprehension.
❏ Sally will receive one segment per day outside the general education setting for instruction in Language Arts. Her skills in written expression are far below grade level, and she will receive individualized instruction to address deficits in grammar, spelling, and sentence structure.
❏ Joe will receive five segments per day of instruction outside the general education setting due to the need for a modified curriculum. He will receive specialized instruction in academics utilizing adaptive and assistive technology and daily living skills requiring one-on-one instruction and repeated practice to increase independence.
❏ Sam will receive Speech for one hour per week in the therapy room in order to remediate his moderate articulation disorder in a quiet and structured setting.

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS OR MODIFICATIONS

Accommodations used for statewide assessment must be consistent with accommodations used for classroom instruction/testing and specified in the IEP. Some accommodations used for instruction may not be allowed for statewide assessment. Refer to the GaDOE Student Assessment Handbook for the approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Conditional accommodations are only allowed for students who meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the handbook. Only students with significant cognitive disabilities may be allowed to participate in the GAA, and this decision is documented in the IEP.

STATE ASSESSMENT

Students who should participate in the regular assessment are those students whose IEP teams have determined that it is reasonable for them to participate in the statewide or district-wide assessment(s) with appropriate accommodations. The decision for reasonableness is based on many factors. IEP teams should ask the following question: Is the focus of the student's

instruction based on state standards or a modified curriculum? If the student's instruction is based on state standards, the student should be taking the regular assessment.

Once it has been determined that the student is going to participate in the regular assessment program, consideration must be given to both instructional and testing accommodations. Many students with disabilities participate in assessments with no accommodations because of the nature of their disability.

The challenge for the IEP team is to look at the instructional accommodations and classroom testing accommodations the student uses and decide which of these is necessary for participation in the statewide assessment. The goal is to allow the student with a disability the opportunity to participate in the assessment in the most standard way possible.

If the student's instruction is an alternate, functional curriculum with state standard components and not the state standards curriculum, the student should be placed on the GAA. Always consult with the Director of Special Education prior to recommending the GAA for a student. Although it is an IEP team decision whether a student should participate in the GAA, certain Georgia guidelines must be followed in making that determination. Consultation with the Director of Special Education ensures that these guidelines are followed.

STUDENT SUPPORTS: ACCOMMODATIONS, SUPPLEMENTAL AIDS AND SERVICES, AND SUPPORTS

❏ All new teachers of a student must be provided a copy or access to the classroom and state assessment accommodations for a special education student.
❏ All accommodations and/or modifications that a student needs for access to the general curriculum must be indicated in the IEP
❏ Supports for School Personnel are anything that the school personnel may need (training, etc.) to help the student access the general curriculum. If you feel like additional support for school personnel is needed, please contact the Special Education Director.

CONSIDERATION OF EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

Each LEA must ensure that extended school year services (ESY) are available as necessary to provide FAPE. ESY services must be provided only if a child's IEP Team determines, on an individual basis, that the services are necessary for the provision of FAPE to the child. The LEA may not limit ESY services to a particular disability category or unilaterally limit the type, amount, or duration of those services.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

Extended School Year refers to special education and/or related services beyond the normal school year of a public agency to provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to a student with a disability in accordance with the child's IEP, at no cost to the family. The need for

ESY is determined by the completion of the ESY eligibility. If eligible, the IEP team will determine the dates for ESY as well as the goals/objectives to be extended.

Progress Monitoring and Data Collection

- ❏ Progress monitor for ALL goals as appropriate
- ❏ Collect data after a long break
- ❏ If regression is observed, continue to progress monitor for recoupment

Factors to Consider for ESY

- ❏ Regression and Recoupment
- ❏ Degree of Progress
- ❏ Emerging Skills and Breakthrough Opportunities
- ❏ Interfering Behaviors
- ❏ Nature and/or Severity of the Disability

ESY SUMMARY

Decisions about the need for ESY services are determined by IEP teams, not individuals. Decisions about ESY must be made individually on an annual basis for all students with disabilities. ESY occurs beyond the regular school term at no cost to the parent. “Necessary for FAPE” is the only criterion found in regulations to guide decision-making. ESY services are special education and related services. ESY is not tutoring, summer school, or enrichment, and is subject to all rules and regulations surrounding the provision of special services

TRANSITION SERVICES

The purpose of a Transition Plan is to assist students in building the skills and supports they need to reach their post-school goals. Transition planning must begin no later than the 9th grade or by age 16, whichever comes first.

MEASURABLE POST-SECONDARY OUTCOME/COMPLETION GOALS:

These goals should be measurable post-secondary outcomes/completion goals of what the student wants to achieve after graduation. They should be “major life accomplishments” or “completion goals.” These should be in the areas of Education/Training, Employment, and Independent Living (as appropriate). These goals should be written in easy-to-understand language. These outcome/completion goals can change and become more refined as the student has more experience and gets closer to graduation. They should occur after the student graduates from high school.

MEASURABLE TRANSITION IEP GOALS:

These goals should be based on age-appropriate transition assessment and include transition activities and services appropriate to attain the Post-Secondary Outcome/Completion Goals. This section should include measurable transition goals that directly relate to the how, when,

where, and what is needed to complete each post-secondary outcome/completion goal. They should be relevant to “how to get to” the desired post-secondary outcomes. They must be meaningful. This section is divided into Education/training, Development of Employment, Community Participation, Adult Living Skills, Post School Options, Related Services, and Daily Living Skills (as appropriate). There must be at least one measurable transition goal for Education/Training and Employment. Measurable transition goals for Independent Living should be addressed as appropriate.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT: PREFERENCES AND INTERESTS

An assessment of the skills and interests related to education, employment, training, and independent living skills (as appropriate) should be conducted in conjunction with the development of the transition components. Assessment tools that clearly describe a student’s strengths and weaknesses and document interests and perceptions about their skills should also be utilized. There are six characteristics that should be considered when conducting a transition assessment: the assessment should be child-centered, continuous, and occurring in many places, involving a variety of people, have understandable data, and be sensitive to cultural diversity.

TRANSITION ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES:

This section should address the transition activities that are needed to attain these measurable goals. Transition Activities and Services should be planned as the “what is needed to achieve these goals,” and should be individualized for the student. For best practice, at least two transition activities should be developed for each goal.

PERSONS AND AGENCY INVOLVED:

This section should include who will help the student achieve the goals stated. There must be documentation that these persons were invited to the Transition IEP meeting and that the parents and student (if 18 years old) were notified of their possible attendance.

DATE OF COMPLETION AND ACHIEVED OUTCOME:

This part of the Transition Plan is left blank and then completed at the next annual review.

TRANSFER OF RIGHTS

At age 18, students become their own educational decision makers, unless a court decides they are not able to make these decisions. On or before the student’s 17th birthday, the school is to inform the parents and the student that at age 18, the student attains the age of majority in Georgia and will become his or her educational decision maker. This is done during the IEP meeting. The school may also inform parents of other options or where to get more information about guardianships, powers of attorney, and other options. Beginning at the age of 18, the school is to send all notices to both the parent and the student, but the student will provide informed written consent for any action requested by the system. When the student turns 18,

he or she becomes the educational decision maker, but the parents retain the rights to all notices of meetings, notices of changes in program or placement, and notices of evaluations while the student is eligible under IDEA. A student must be informed of his/her rights at 17 years old, and it must be documented and dated. Once the student turns 18, it must be documented and dated that the student has been informed that the rights have been transferred.

EXCUSAL OF IEP TEAM MEMBER

A member of the IEP Team described in may be excused from attending an IEP Team meeting, in whole or in part, when the meeting involves a modification to or discussion of the member's area of the curriculum or related services, if: The parent, in writing, and the LEA consent to the excusal; and if the member submits, in writing to the parent and the IEP Team, input into the development of the IEP prior to the meeting.

TRANSITION FOR CHILDREN AGES, BIRTH-TWO (PART C)

In the case of a child, birth through age 2, who was previously served under BCW, an invitation to the initial IEP Team meeting should, at the request of the parent, be sent to the BCW service coordinator or other representatives of BCW to assist with the smooth transition of services.

PARENT PARTICIPATION IN THE IEP

Each LEA may take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents of a child with a disability are present at each IEP Team meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate, including notifying parents of the meeting early enough to ensure that they will have an opportunity to attend, and scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed upon time and place.

If neither parent can attend an IEP Team meeting, the LEA must use other methods to ensure parent participation, including individual or conference telephone calls or video conferences. A meeting may be conducted without the parents in attendance if the LEA is unable to convince the parents that they should attend. In this case, the LEA must keep a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed on time and place such as detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted and the results of those calls; copies of correspondence sent to the parents and any responses received; and detailed records and results of visits made to the home or place of employment and the results of those visits. Documentation of attempts will be maintained using multiple sources, including but not limited to the GO-IEP Log, Parent Mentor Contact Log, and/or PowerSchool Contact Log, as determined by each principal.

The LEA must take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parents understand the proceedings of the IEP Team meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for a parent who is deaf or whose native language is other than English.

IEP / IFSP

A meeting to develop an IEP for a child is conducted within 30 days of a determination that the child needs special education and related services, and as soon as possible following development of the IEP, special education and related services are made available to the child in accordance with the child's IEP. The case manager must ensure the student's IEP is accessible to each regular education teacher, special education teacher, related services provider, and any other service provider who is responsible for its implementation. Each teacher and provider must be informed of his or her specific responsibilities related to implementing the student's IEP, and the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the child in accordance with the IEP. The IEP must be current within a year and updated at least annually.

TRANSFER WITHIN THE STATE OF GEORGIA

When a student transfers to Webster County from within the state of Georgia, please notify the system's special education transfer coordinator immediately. The transfer coordinator will complete the following:

1. Verify services - You can get this verbally on the phone from the sending school or by receiving paperwork. Access SLDS for an additional resource for verification of services. As soon as you get verification that the student is a student with a disability, you must begin serving immediately. You cannot send the student home or defer services until all paperwork is received.

2. Contact the Special Education Director to see if the student has ever received Special Education services in Webster County. If the student has been previously served in Webster County, the Special Education office should have a file on the student.

3. Get Parental Consent for Services.

4. Have the parent sign the release for information. Parent signature is not required by law for records to be transferred; however, some systems continue to ask for it. A signed release form allows us to get records without any problems or delays. If appropriate, a separate release should be signed for medical records. All students being served under the category of Other Health Impaired (OHI) must have medical records.

5. The registrar will email the release to the sending system for all Special Education records: current IEP, Psychological Evaluation, and current Eligibility Report. We must have all of these documents. All records should be sent to the Special Education Director. If you have problems getting records or need assistance, please contact the Special Education Director.

6. Once records are received, the student will have a mock eligibility and mock IEP entered into GO-IEP if they are transferring from a system that does not use GO-IEP.

7. The case manager will need to hold a transfer IEP meeting to review IEP goals, accommodations, and services. This meeting is typically held within 20 days of enrollment. Please use the Transfer IEP form to document this meeting. Submit paperwork, including amendment paperwork, if necessary, to the special education office. Case managers will provide necessary information to general education teachers and related service providers.

8. Once all paperwork is received, it will need to be scanned into GO-IEP. Paperwork should be sent to the special education office so a file can be created.

OUT OF STATE TRANSFER

When a student transfers to Webster County from out of state, please notify the system's special education transfer coordinator immediately. The transfer coordinator will complete the following:

1. Verify services - You can get this verbally on the phone from the sending school or by receiving paperwork. As soon as you get verification that the student is a student with a disability, you must begin serving immediately. You cannot send the student home or defer services until all paperwork is received.

2. Contact our office to see if the student has ever received Special Education services in Webster County. If the student has been here previously, we should have a file on this student.

3. Get Parental Consent for Services.

4. Have the parent sign the release for information. Parent signature is not required by law for records to be transferred; however, some systems continue to ask for it. A signed release form allows us to get records without any problems or delays. If appropriate, a separate release should be signed for medical records. All students being served under the category of Other Health Impaired (OHI) must have medical records.

5. The registrar will email the release to the sending system for all Special Education records: current IEP, Psychological Evaluation, and current Eligibility Report. We must have all of these documents. All records should be sent to the Special Education Director. If you have problems getting records or need assistance, please contact the Special Education Director.

6. Once all paperwork is received, the documentation will be reviewed.

7. The case manager will hold a transfer IEP meeting. The meeting is typically held within 20 days of enrollment. At this time, we will accept their eligibility OR get consent to evaluate to determine eligibility in the state of Georgia. If we do not accept the out-of-state eligibility, then it becomes an initial in the state of Georgia, and we are held to the 60-day timeline. If we do accept their eligibility, then the eligibility date becomes the date of enrollment.

If eligibility is accepted, a new IEP will be written in this meeting. Goals, accommodations, and services will be addressed based on the child's needs.

If eligibility is not accepted, services will be provided in accordance with the out-of-state IEP until the Georgia evaluation/eligibility is completed. If found eligible in Georgia, an initial IEP will be written.

8. Submit paperwork to the special education office. Case managers will provide necessary information to general education teachers and related service providers.

FERPA AND THE TRANSMITTAL OF RECORDS

The new LEA in which the child enrolls must take reasonable steps to promptly obtain the child's records, including the IEP, supporting documents, and any other records relating to the provision of special education or related services to the child, from the previous LEA in which the child was enrolled, pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (which does not require prior parental consent to disclose education records to officials of another school where the student seeks or intends to enroll); and The previous LEA in which the child was enrolled must take reasonable steps to promptly respond to the request from the new LEA.

REVIEW AND REVISION OF THE IEP

Each LEA must ensure that the IEP Team reviews the child's IEP periodically, but not less than annually, to determine whether the annual goals for the child are being achieved; and revises the IEP, as appropriate. Revisions of the IEP should address any lack of expected progress toward the annual goals and in the general curriculum, the results of any reevaluations conducted, information about the child provided to or by the parents, and the child's anticipated needs or other matters. An IEP must be in effect at the beginning of each school year.

DEVELOPMENT, REVIEW, AND REVISION OF THE IEP

The IEP team should consider:

- ❏ The strengths of the child and the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child.
- ❏ The results of the initial or most recent evaluation of the child
- ❏ The academic, developmental, and functional needs of the child.

Special Factors to be considered are:

- ❏ In the case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior.
- ❏ In the case of a child with limited English proficiency, consider the language needs of the child as those needs relate to the child's IEP;

❏ In the case of a child who is blind or visually impaired, provide for instruction in Braille and the use of Braille unless the IEP team determines, after an evaluation of the child's reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the child's future needs for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille), that instruction in Braille or the use of Braille is not appropriate for the child;
❏ Consider the communication needs of the child, and in the case of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the child's language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the child's language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the child's language and communication mode;
❏ Consider the need for assistive technology devices and services.

MINUTES OF MEETING (MEETING NOTES)

Meeting minutes are not required, but left up to each individual teacher to determine whether writing minutes is necessary or not. It is recommended that any additional information that is not included in the IEP be documented on the Meeting Notes section of GO-IEP. When an IEP amendment is made, meeting notes must be documented to reflect the amended changes and committee agreement.

AMENDING THE IEP

After the annual IEP meeting, there may be a need to change the IEP. This can be done either by reconvening the IEP Team to discuss recommendations or by mutual agreement between the parent and the system to make changes to the IEP without a meeting. If a mutual agreement is made between the parent and the system, it should be documented in the meeting minutes section within the GO-IEP of the amended IEP. The parent always retains the right to request a meeting for all changes or amendments to the IEP. Regardless of the method of changing the IEP, the parent must be provided a copy of the changes in a timely manner with an explanation of the changes made. Amendment statements must be documented in the meeting notes after completing an audit in GO-IEP.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

You must have open communication with the ESOL teacher at the school to determine which students are SWD. If a student is in both subgroups, then the ESOL teacher should be a member of the IEP team since that teacher has knowledge of the student's performance and is involved in the student's education. The ESOL teacher should be present and should participate in the development of the IEP, as would the student's other teachers. The IEP should document the participation of the ESOL teacher in the IEP meeting for students eligible as both EL and SWD. The plan should include documentation of ESOL services as well as appropriate accommodations needed for ACCESS. IEP meeting notice and parental safeguards should be

provided in the student's primary language. The language interpreter should attend all meetings if necessary.

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT AND BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN

When a student engages in behavior that interferes with the student's learning or that of other students, the IEP team is required to conduct an FBA. The FBA is then used to develop the BIP. Parent consent must be obtained before conducting an FBA.

A Majority of students identified as Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD) should have a BIP. However, a BIP should be developed for a student in any categorical placement if the student's behavior is negatively impacting the student's educational progress or the educational progress of other students.

The BIP should be reviewed at least annually, or sooner as appropriate.

PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING (FBA) AND DEVELOPING A (BIP)

1. Student exhibits significant problem behavior(s)and has been unresponsive to previously implemented interventions. (Student is either at RTI-Tier 3 or has an IEP)
2. SST or IEP Team determines that an FBA may be needed. SST or IEP Team completes an FBA Referral Form and submit to the Director of Special Education.
3. FBA is conducted, and a report is sent to the referring SST or IEP Team
4. SST or IEP Team will convene to develop a Behavior Intervention Plan based on FBA data.
5. The Behavior Intervention Plan is implemented, and progress is monitored by the SST or IEP Team

PERSONNEL, FACILITIES, AND CASELOADS
STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.14

MAINTENANCE OF CREDENTIALS FOR PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

Maintenance of current credentials may be the ongoing responsibility of any professional employed by or under contract with an LEA. Maintenance of records of current credentials may be the ongoing responsibility of the LEA. The LEA may recruit, hire, train, and retain an adequate supply of highly qualified (certified or licensed) personnel, including special education, related services, and leadership personnel, to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

Related service personnel who deliver services in their discipline or profession must maintain a current, State of Georgia-approved or recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the professional discipline in which those personnel are providing related services. Related service personnel must not have had certification or licensure waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis.

CLASSROOM SIZE AND APPROPRIATENESS

The LEA may provide a classroom of suitable size in a distraction-free area, as required by the type of program or services to be established, with appropriate furniture, materials, supplies, and equipment to meet the needs of the class or individual children to be served. GaDOE has established this policy as a safeguard to prevent placing children with disabilities in classrooms that are too small, have visual or auditory distractions, or do not have items necessary to provide appropriate instruction.

Thirty-eight square feet may be provided for each child in the class, with a variance of 10 percent depending upon the total number of personnel in the class at any time, the type of children and class, the kind and amount of furniture and equipment required, and the necessity for storage capabilities. Special circumstances may be reviewed by the Facilities Department of the GaDOE and may be addressed in the approved local facility plan.

MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE AND CASELOAD BY ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY

	MAX CLASS SIZE	MAX CASELOAD
FULL DAY	8	16
PART DAY	12	32
COMMUNITY	-	32

PROGRAM AREA	SELF-CONTAINED: RESOURCE	MAX WITHOUT PARA	MAX WITH PARA	CASELOAD
MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY	SC	10	13	14
	RESOURCE	10	13	26

MODERATE ID	SC	NA	11	11
SEVERE	SC	NA	7	7
PROFOUND	SC	NA	6	6
EBD	SC RESOURCE	8 7	11 10	12 26
SLD	SC RESOURCE	12 8	16 10	16 26
VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS	SC RESOURCE	NA 3	6 4	7 13
DEAF/HH	SC	NA	6	7
SPEECH-LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENTS	SC RESOURCE	11 7	15 NA	15 55
ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENTS	SC RESOURCE	NA 4	11 5	11 15

GEORGIA NETWORK FOR EDUCATIONAL AND THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT (GNETS) STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.15

GEORGIA NETWORK FOR EDUCATIONAL AND THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT (GNETS)

The Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) is a service available within the continuum of supports for LEAs to consider when determining the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities, ages 5-21. GNETS services are an option in the continuum of supports that prevent children from requiring residential or more restrictive placement. Specifically, GNETS provides comprehensive educational and therapeutic support services to students who exhibit intense social, emotional, and/or behavioral challenges with a severity, frequency, or duration such that the provision of education and related services in the general education environment has not enabled him or her to benefit educationally based on the IEP.

ELIGIBILITY AND PLACEMENT

Students receiving services through a GNETS Program are referred by their local school system through the Individual Education Program (IEP) process. An IEP team may consider in-class services by a GNETS program for a child with an emotional and behavioral disorder based upon documentation of the severity of the duration, frequency, and intensity of one or more of the characteristics of the disability category of emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). This documentation must include prior extension of less restrictive services and data that indicate such services have not enabled the child to benefit educationally. For children receiving in-class services, local schools are actively involved, and exit criteria are developed upon entry into the GNETS program.

The IEP team must be certain they have provided a continuum of services, referred for FBA and written BIP, and can produce the data to show a lack of progress. This continuation of service must be appropriate for students who have severe emotional difficulties and are unable to make progress in the general education environment. The IEP team will review the following data:

- ❏ Classroom observations were made by a variety of staff.
- ❏ Information gathered from Functional Behavior Analysis (FBA)
- ❏ Progress monitoring data from BIP and academic interventions (IEP goals)
- ❏ Data gathered from students, parents, and staff will help the IEP team determine if the behaviors are emotional or conduct in nature
- ❏ Entrance and Exit criteria specific to each student

GNETS personnel will contact the school to schedule student observations and/or teacher interviews. When all information is collected, a meeting will be scheduled at the student's home school. The Special Education Director needs to be present. Webster County's GNETS partner is located in Sumter County.

DOCUMENTATION OF ONGOING EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT

The GaDOE is responsible for implementing and ensuring that GNETS programs have an ongoing system for documenting effectiveness and program improvement based on GaDOE requirements and guidance from stakeholders. Procedures for evaluating program effectiveness and program improvement are outlined in the Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) manual.
http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Documents/GNETS/FY14%20Operations%20Manual.pdf

RECOMMENDED CLASS SIZE BY LEVEL

The recommended maximum class size for preschool, elementary, and middle school classes is eight. The recommended maximum class size for high school classes is ten.

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS

GNETS programs may utilize evidence-based positive behavioral interventions, supports, and other strategies designed to increase children's resilience and social-emotional competence

ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

The academic curriculum for all children may be Georgia's general education curriculum.

AREA OF GENERAL SUPERVISION III: STUDENT PROGRESS

FREE AND APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE)
STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.02

FAPE: FULL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

All students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are entitled to a free, appropriate public education (FAPE). This includes children who are eligible for special education from the ages of three (3) through twenty-one (21). The special education and related services that make up the FAPE are provided to children identified with disabilities who have an IEP at no cost to the parent.

FAPE FOR STUDENTS AGED 22

All Children with disabilities between the ages of 3 through 21 who are residing in Webster County are entitled to a free, appropriate public education (FAPE), including children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school.
A student receiving special education services in Webster County Schools will be served until the date of the student's 22nd birthday. If the student's 22nd birthday falls during the summer, the student's last day of services will be the last school day prior to summer vacation. It is the goal of Webster County Schools to secure the successful transition of students to their desired post-school outcomes and will collaborate to complete the transition by age 22. The adult student and parents should be notified that no individual entitlement to FAPE or other rights under IDEA is afforded the adult student after age 22.

FAPE PROVISIONS BY STUDENTS' 3RD BIRTHDAY

Children with disabilities may be served in Babies Can't Wait in Webster County, as well as other agencies from birth to age 3. By age three, a transition meeting is held, and if the student is eligible for services (FAPE), the children are then served under IDEA with a Webster County Schools IEP. Webster County Schools works collaboratively with Babies Can't Wait as well as other agencies to ensure services are provided in Webster County from birth through 21.

FAPE FOR INCARCERATED STUDENTS

Students eligible for special education services who have an IEP and who are in a facility operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) or the Department of Corrections (DOC) must receive their educational programs. Each of these agencies provides services to students

within their facilities in Georgia. Each agency has the responsibility to identify, evaluate, determine eligibility, and provide special education and related services to students. These agencies will contact the most recent public school attended by a student to obtain copies of educational records so that FAPE can be provided. DJJ and DOC are public schools and should be treated as other public schools when providing records in an expeditious manner.

Adult students who are between the ages of 18 and 21 who, before being in the correctional facility (jail), did not have an IEP the last time they attended school, are the exception. These students do not have an entitlement to FAPE.

A student with a current IEP who is in the community jail, such as those managed by city or county agencies, is also entitled to FAPE. In these circumstances, the district where the student is incarcerated is responsible for providing services.

DEFINITION OF REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

The standard high school diploma that is awarded to students in the State and that is fully aligned with the State's academic content standards or a higher diploma and does not include a General Educational Development (GED) credential, certificate of attendance, or any alternative award. The term regular high school diploma does not include an alternative degree that is not aligned with the State's academic standards, such as a special education diploma, certificate of attendance, or a general educational development credential.

DELAY OF SERVICES NOT ALLOWED

The LEA must ensure that there is no delay in implementing a child's IEP, including any case in which the payment source for providing or paying for special education and related services to the child is being determined. Services are provided in compliance with the student's IEP.

MEDICAID PAYMENT ALLOWANCES AND LIMITATIONS

A LEA may use the Medicaid or other public benefits or insurance programs in which a child participates to provide or pay for services required under IDEA, as permitted by the public benefits or insurance. The LEA may not require the parents to sign up for or enroll in public benefits or insurance programs for their child to receive FAPE. The LEA may not require the parents to incur any out-of-pocket expenses, such as the payment of a deductible or co-pay amount incurred in filing a claim for services provided, but may pay the cost the parents would otherwise be required to pay.

Medicaid Waivers are for students who are intellectually disabled (MIID, MOID, SID, PID) or who are physically/orthopedically impaired. Some students who are autistic can also apply for the waiver; however, there must be evidence of significant intellectual deficits (3 standard deviations below average IQ) and an adaptive behavior composite below 70. Medicaid waivers can provide funding for students into their adult years who need supported employment (job

coaching), residential care, respite care, supported living arrangements, day services/day habilitation, transportation, etc.

NOTICE TO PARENTS REGARDING USE OF BENEFITS

Webster County Schools may obtain parental consent prior to accessing a child's or parent's public benefits or insurance for the first time and after providing notification to the child's parents. A record of the MEDICAID parental consent is scanned into the GO-IEP documents tab annually.

RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT

If placement in a public or private residential program is necessary to provide special education and related services to a child with a disability, the program, including non-medical care and room and board, must be at no cost to the parents of the child.

PROVISION OF ACCESSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Webster County Schools must provide print instructional materials in an accessible format to students who are blind or other print disabled. These materials must be provided promptly, usually about the same time as the traditional materials are received by other students, unless unusual circumstances exist. Accessible formats include braille, audio, or digital text, but do not include the alteration of the content. Refer to Georgia Rule 160-4-7-.02 Free Appropriate Public Education for the detailed explanation of children who are blind or otherwise print disabled.

PROVISION OF UPKEEP AND DISPOSITION OF INVENTORY & EQUIPMENT

The Webster County Federal Programs department adheres to policy DIB regarding the disposition of equipment. Disposed equipment will remain on the inventory list for at least 3 years. More guidance is available in the federal programs procedure guide.

PROVISION OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Children with disabilities who require assistive technology to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) are eligible for assistive technology devices or services, or both, as a part of the child's special education, related services, or supplemental aids and services. Refer to the Webster County Assistive Technology Manual.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EVALUATIONS

An assistive technology evaluation may be required if appropriate assistive technology solutions are not known to the child's IEP Team through the consideration process. This evaluation may be conducted by the Webster County Assistive Technology Team. The child and family should

also be included in this evaluation process. The evaluation will result in recommendations for assistive technology devices and services, if required.

HOME USE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

If the IEP Team determines that the child with a disability requires school-purchased assistive technology at home or in other settings to receive a FAPE, the assistive technology must be provided to the child at no cost to the parent. The need for assistive technology in non-school settings should be documented in the child's IEP.

FAPE AND EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

Webster County Schools must provide extended school year (ESY) services to students who need such services to receive FAPE. Extended school year services must be provided only if a child's IEP Team determines, on an individual basis, that the services are necessary for the provision of FAPE to the child. ESY services are those services a student requires beyond the normal school year of the district and are not limited to only the summer months. The IEP team determines the details of ESY, such as what services will be provided, when and where the services will take place, and the frequency and duration of the services. Any services provided as ESY must meet the requirements of FAPE. ESY considerations should be shared directly with the Director of Special Education so appropriate arrangements can be made promptly.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ACCESSIBILITY

FAPE can also include nonacademic and extracurricular services. Webster County Schools must consider supplementary aids and services necessary to provide students with disabilities the equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities. This may include, but is not limited to, participation in clubs, referral to agencies that provide services, special interest groups, employment assistance, counseling, health services, or athletics. An IEP does not negate eligibility requirements such as having to try out for the team or having a required minimum GPA.

ACCESS TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPECIALLY DESIGNED PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education services, specially designed if necessary, must be made available to every child with a disability receiving FAPE, unless the LEA enrolls children without disabilities and does not provide physical education to children without disabilities in the same grades. Each child with a disability must be allowed to participate in the regular physical education program available to nondisabled children unless he child is enrolled full time in a separate facility, or the child needs specially designed physical education, as prescribed in the child's IEP. If specially designed physical education is prescribed in a child's IEP, the LEA responsible for the education of that child must provide the services directly or make arrangements for those services to be provided through other public or private programs.

SERVICES TO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS: LEA AND NON-LEA CHARTERS

Children who attend public charter schools and their parents retain all rights given to them in the public school under the IDEA. In general, two types of charter schools are present in the state: public schools or public school districts that operate according to the terms of a charter or contract that has been approved by a local board of education and the State Board of Education; and state chartered special schools that operate according to the terms of a charter or contract that has been approved by the State Board of Education. Charter schools must make available the services needed to provide education for students with IEPs. The charter that is part of a district has, as part of its resources, the full continuum of services and supports within the district. At times, a student's IEP may determine that a specific setting is needed that may not be available at the charter, but that is available at another school within the district. The charter that is part of the district may not, however, decline to serve students with IEPs.

If the charter is a state charter school, the school is responsible for finding a way to provide whatever services the IEP team determines are appropriate for a student with an IEP who chooses to enroll in the charter. Students with IEPs may not be discriminated against, and a state charter must accept students who choose to enroll.

The central office of Webster County must treat charter schools that are part of the local district the same as all other individual schools within the district. This includes flowing funds, state and federal, to the charter at the same time as money is sent to other schools. This also includes providing services or supports that are centrally based in the same manner as for other schools. For example, if the central office of the local district funds the occupational therapist for any student in any school who needs the service to receive FAPE, then the students in the charter school must also be included.

Currently, no Charter Schools are operating within Webster County.

PROGRAMMING OPTIONS AND EQUAL ACCESS

Each LEA may take steps to ensure that children with disabilities have available to them the variety of educational programs and services available to nondisabled children in the area served by the LEA, including art, music, and Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education.

HEARING EQUIPMENT CHECKS

Each LEA must ensure that hearing aids worn in school by children with hearing impairments, including deafness, are functioning properly. External components of surgically implanted medical devices. Each LEA must ensure that the external components of surgically implanted medical devices are functioning properly. The LEA is not responsible for the post-surgical maintenance, programming, or replacement of the medical device that has been surgically implanted (or of an external component of the surgically implanted medical device).

PROHIBITION OF MANDATORY MEDICATION

Webster County Schools may not require medication as a condition of attending school, receiving an evaluation, or receiving services. Parents make the decisions regarding their children and any medication they administer or do not administer. Webster County Schools will not make medical decisions that require medication.

AREA OF GENERAL SUPERVISION IV: PARENT ENGAGEMENT

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS AND PARENT RIGHTS
STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.09

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 34 C.F.R.§ 300 et seq. (IDEA), the federal law concerning the education of students with disabilities, requires schools to provide parents of a child with a disability with notice containing a full explanation of the procedural safeguards available under the IDEA and U.S. Department of Education regulations. The term “Procedural Safeguards Notice” also refers to the document commonly identified as “Parent Rights”. The Parent Rights in Special Education (Parent Rights) notice provided the foundation for ensuring that a child with a disability has access to FAPE. The Parent Rights notice provides parents with the opportunity to understand their rights, the rights of their child, and procedures for resolving differences. This document will also help to facilitate communication between parents and system personnel.

WHEN PARENTAL RIGHTS MUST BE GIVEN

The Parent Rights should be given to parents at a minimum of once per year. It should be given to parents when they are asked to sign a Consent for Evaluation form, a Consent for Placement/Services form, and at the initial IEP meeting and each IEP annual review meeting. The LEA, upon receipt of a formal complaint, must also provide a copy of the Parent Rights to the parents.

CONTENT OF PARENTAL RIGHTS

The parental rights notice must contain legal information on the following topics:
- ❏ Prior written notice
- ❏ Parental consent
- ❏ Access to education records
- ❏ Complaint process
- ❏ Mediation
- ❏ Student placement during the pending due process
- ❏ Interim placements
- ❏ Independent educational evaluations
- ❏ Private school placement by parents
- ❏ Due process hearings

❏ Attorneys' fees
❏ Provided in a language understandable to parents

PARENTAL OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW RECORDS

Districts must maintain the confidentiality of information in children's educational records. The district can assume that both parents of a child have the authority to inspect and review the child's records unless the district is notified in writing that a parent's rights to see the records have been terminated by a court order. Parents of a child with a disability must be allowed an opportunity to inspect and review all education records concerning: Identification- Process to determine eligibility, Evaluation- Nature and scope of assessment procedures, Placement- Educational placement of the child, and FAPE- Provision of a free appropriate public education.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION IN MEETING

The parents of a child with a disability must be afforded an opportunity to participate in meetings concerning the identification, evaluation, educational placement, and the provision of a FAPE to the child. Webster County Schools must provide a written notice. Webster County Schools may ensure that a parent of each child with a disability is a member of any group that makes decisions on the educational placement of the child (refer to IEP TEAM). Parent participation must be documented on the Notice of IEP Meeting, Meeting Attendance Form, and the IEP team member listed on the IEP. If the parents cannot participate in a meeting in which a decision is to be made relating to the educational placement of their child, the LEA may use other methods to ensure their participation, including individual or conference telephone calls or video conferencing. A placement decision may be made by a group without the involvement of the parent(s) if the LEA is unable to obtain their participation in the decision. In this case, the LEA must have a record of its attempts to ensure its involvement. Parent contacts should be documented in the Log in GO-IEP.

INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATIONS

When a parent of a student with a disability disagrees with an evaluation conducted by Webster County Schools, the parent has the right to request that Webster County Schools fund an independent educational evaluation (IEE). An IEE is an evaluation conducted by a qualified examiner who is not an employee of the School System. Any results obtained through an IEE must be considered by the School System in any eligibility or placement decision.

The evaluation of children referred because of learning and/or behavior problems is the responsibility of a multidisciplinary evaluation team. For children who require a psychological and clinical evaluation, it must be conducted by a qualified psychological examiner:
❏ Evaluation results used for consideration of eligibility for special education, if not provided by a school psychologist with a valid S-5 (or higher) certificate in school psychology, may be from one of the following:
❏ A psychologist licensed by the Georgia Board of Examiners of Psychologists and having training and experience in school psychology or child clinical psychology.

❏ A full-time graduate student in an approved, properly supervised school psychology or child clinical psychology training program internship/practicum, who has completed a minimum of one year of approved, appropriate graduate training.
❏ A Georgia Merit System employee who has a classification rating of psychologist, senior psychologist, or psychology program specialist.

INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA: SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

Upon approval by the District of an Independent Educational Evaluation in the area of speech evaluation, you may proceed with selecting an evaluator who meets the following criteria. The independent evaluator must maintain the same qualifications as the evaluator(s) who conducted the School District's evaluation with which you disagree.

The evaluator must:
❏ Have training and experience in speech, language, and central auditory processing disorders; and
❏ Hold a licensure in speech language pathology in Georgia;
❏ Hold at least a Master's degree in speech language pathology; and
❏ Have experience conducting a speech language evaluation and recommending school-based services.

Assessments utilized must comply with the same requirements for assessments completed by the School District and must comply with all state and federal laws. The independent evaluator must provide the school system with a written evaluation report after the evaluation, at the same time it is provided to the family. The evaluation report must contain at least the following: dates the evaluation was conducted; relevant medical and/or educational history; summary of all education information reviewed; summary of data collection in the school environment; a discussion and interpretation of test results; and school-based recommendations. Payment will be rendered to the independent evaluator upon receipt of the evaluation report. Prior to the evaluation, parents must provide written consent for an exchange of information between the District and the independent evaluator, including the release to the district of the evaluation report and results of all assessment data collected by the independent evaluator(s). The evaluation report will be provided to the District at the same time it is provided to the parents.

The Webster County School District will reimburse the independent evaluator up to $250 for the evaluation and report. Any additional expenses, including attendance at an IEP, may not be included in the cost and will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be approved in writing by the Director of Special Education.

The independent evaluator must be found within a 100-mile range of Preston, Georgia.

Exceptions to the above criteria will be considered on a case-by-case basis with prior approval by the Special Education Director.

Sydney Barfield
Special Education Director
Webster County Schools

INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA: OCCUPATIONAL AND PHYSICAL THERAPY

Upon approval by the District of an Independent Educational Evaluation in the area of occupational therapy, you may proceed with selecting an evaluator who meets the following criteria. The independent evaluator must maintain the same qualifications as the evaluator(s) who conducted the School District's evaluation with which you disagree.

The evaluator must:
❏ Have training and experience in occupational/physical therapy; and
❏ Hold a licensure in occupational/physical therapy in Georgia; and
❏ Hold at least a Master's degree in occupational/physical therapy; and
❏ Have experience conducting an occupational/physical therapy evaluation and recommending school-based services.

Assessments utilized must comply with the same requirements for assessments completed by the School District and must comply with all state and federal laws. The independent evaluator must provide the school system with a written evaluation report after the evaluation, at the same time it is provided to the family. The evaluation report must contain at least the following: dates the evaluation was conducted; relevant medical and/or educational history; summary of all education information reviewed; summary of data collection in the school environment; a discussion and interpretation of test results; and school-based recommendations.

Payment will be rendered to the independent evaluator upon receipt of the evaluation report. Prior to the evaluation, parents must provide written consent for an exchange of information between the District and the independent evaluator, including the release to the district of the evaluation report and results of all assessment data collected by the independent evaluator(s). The evaluation report will be provided to the District at the same time it is provided to the parents.

The Webster County School District will reimburse the independent evaluator up to $250 for the evaluation and report. Any additional expenses, including attendance at an IEP, may not be included in the cost and will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be approved in writing by the Director of Special Education.

The independent evaluator must be found within a 100-mile range of Preston, Georgia.

Exceptions to the above criteria will be considered on a case-by-case basis with prior approval by the Special Education Director.

Sydney Barfield
Special Education Director
Webster County Schools

INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Upon approval by the District of an Independent Educational Evaluation in the area of assistive technology, you may proceed with selecting an evaluator who meets the following criteria.

Assessments utilized must comply with the same requirements for assessments completed by the School District and must be in compliance with all state and federal laws. Assistive technology assessments will include academic and learning aids, aids for daily living, assistive listening devices and environmental aids, augmentative communication, computer access and instruction, environmental control, mobility aids, pre-vocational and vocational aids, recreational and leisure aids, seating and positioning, and visual aids.

The independent evaluator must provide the school system with a written evaluation report after the evaluation, at the same time it is provided to the family. The evaluation report must contain at least the following: dates the evaluation was conducted; relevant medical and/or educational history; summary of all education information reviewed; summary of data collection in the school environment; a discussion and interpretation of test results; and school-based recommendations.

Payment will be rendered to the independent evaluator upon receipt of the evaluation report. Prior to the evaluation, parents must provide written consent for an exchange of information between the District and the independent evaluator, including the release to the district of the evaluation report and results of all assessment data collected by the independent evaluator(s). The evaluation report will be provided to the District at the same time it is provided to the parents.

The Webster County School District will reimburse the independent evaluator up to $150 for the evaluation and report. Any additional expenses, including attendance at an IEP, may not be included in the cost and will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be approved in writing by the Director of Special Education.

The independent evaluator must be found within a 100-mile range of Preston, Georgia. Exceptions to the above criteria will be considered on a case-by-case basis with prior approval by the Special Education Director.

Sydney Barfield

Special Education Director
Webster County Schools

PARENTAL CONSENT

The district is required to obtain informed written consent for any action requested. Parental consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. Consent is required for the following actions:

❏ to conduct an initial evaluation;
❏ to conduct a reevaluation;
❏ for the initial placement of special education and related services on the IEP;
❏ to make a substantial change in special education and related services; and
❏ Before the disclosure of personally identifiable information, that is subject to confidentiality.

PARENT REFUSAL OR REVOCATION OF CONSENT

Parents have the right to request to revoke the consent for the placement of their child with disabilities. If a parent requests to revoke consent, then the special education teacher must notify the Special Education Director so that all steps of Prior Written Notice (PWN) are followed. The IEP team, including the director, will meet with the parent to discuss this request. Often, the parent may not understand all the ramifications of this choice, so the process should be explained to the parents so that they understand the rights that they would be giving up when revoking consent. The following notices are given to the parent of the child:

- ❏ Upon the parents' request, all Special Education services would be eliminated for this student. These may include special transportation, other related services such as Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy, benefits from other public and private programs, testing accommodations, and provision of assistive technology.
- ❏ This revocation may impact the student’s high school graduation requirements and diploma options.
- ❏ The Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed for this student and his/her eligibility/re-determination report has deemed him or her eligible for Special Education and in need of services.
- ❏ By revoking Consent for Placement, the parent would be giving up the procedural safeguards available under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- ❏ The revocation of parental Consent for Placement means that Webster County Schools is not deemed to have “knowledge of disability” under IDEA and that all rules and timelines for student discipline (including suspension, expulsion, and manifestation) that apply to general education students would apply to this student.
- ❏ If the parent changes their mind and wants services, then the parent will be referred to SST.

The parent is not allowed to revoke “partial” consent for only some of the services provided by the IEP. If the parent and Webster County Schools disagree about whether a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) would be provided with or without the provision of a service, the parent may use the due process procedures outlined in Special Education Parental Rights to obtain a ruling regarding the services. Consent for services is for consent for placement in special education.

PARENT CONSENT NOT REQUIRED

Except for an initial evaluation, initial placement, and re-evaluation, consent is not required as a condition of any benefit to the parents or child. For initial evaluations only, if the child is a ward of the state and is not residing with the child’s parent, the LEA is not required to obtain informed consent from the parent for an initial evaluation to determine whether the child is a child with a disability if:
1. Despite reasonable efforts to do so, the LEA cannot discover the whereabouts of the parent of the child;
2. The rights of the parents of the child have been terminated in accordance with state law;
3. The rights of the parent to make educational decisions have been subrogated by a judge in accordance with state law, and consent for an initial evaluation has been given by an individual appointed by the judge to represent the child.

PARENT TRAINING

Parents may be assisted to understand the special needs of their child and information about child development, and to acquire the necessary skills to support the implementation of their child’s IEP if determined by the IEP Team as a related service.

SURROGATE PARENT
STATE RULE: 160-4-7-.11

SURROGATE PARENTS

To provide every student eligible for public education with the protection of procedural due process, under circumstances where a student’s parents or guardians are not known or are unavailable, or a student is a ward of the state, the student will be assigned a surrogate parent. (Refer to Federal Regulations 300.519) The person who is selected to be a surrogate parent may not be an employee of the State Education Agency, or any agency that is involved in the education or care of the child; has no personal or professional interest that conflicts with the interest of the child s/he represents; and has knowledge and skills that ensure adequate representation of the child. In the case of a child who is an unaccompanied homeless youth, appropriate staff of emergency shelters, transitional shelters, independent living programs, and street outreach programs may be appointed as temporary surrogate parents.

Children who are in the custody of DFACS and DJJ are considered “wards of the state,” or in Georgia, the term most often used is “in state custody”. Children in the custody of DJJ or

DFACS who are residing in group homes, residential facilities, or emergency shelters may all qualify as wards of the state who need a surrogate parent. Children in the custody of DFACS who reside with a foster parent are also wards of the state; however, the foster parent can fit the definition of parent under the 2004 IDEA. Therefore, a foster parent can sign without getting a surrogate parent or requiring that the foster parent attend training prior to signing.

GUIDELINES TO DETERMINE THE NEED FOR A SURROGATE PARENT

If the child is in the custody of a State agency (DFACS), then the child is a ward of the state. If the child is a ward of the state, then the following questions must be asked to determine whether a surrogate is needed or not. If the child is in the custody of DFACS, then ask the person enrolling the child if the child resides with a foster parent.

If yes, then the foster parent may sign
If no, then the school will assign a surrogate parent to the case.

If a surrogate parent is needed, contact the special education department for the assignment. Webster County Special Education Department will maintain the surrogate parent list.

CRITERIA FOR SURROGATE PARENT SELECTION

Webster County must ensure that the selected surrogate parent is not an employee of the GaDOE, the LEA or any other agency that is involved in the education or care of the child; has no personal or professional interest that conflicts with the interest of the child the surrogate parent represents; and has knowledge and skills that ensure adequate representation of the child.

SURROGATE PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The surrogate parent may represent the child in all matters relating to the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of the child, and the provision of FAPE to the child.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION
STATE RULE: 160-4-7.12

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

IDEA regulations set forth separate procedures for State complaints and for due process complaints and hearings. While a detailed explanation and description of all dispute resolution is contained in State Board Rule 160-4-7.12 Dispute Resolution, both complaint procedures are explained below:

STATE COMPLAINT PROCESS

Any individual or organization may file a formal written state complaint (state complaint) alleging a violation of any IDEA requirement by a school system, the State Educational Agency (SEA),

or any other public agency. A state complaint must be resolved by the SEA within a 60-calendar-day timeline, unless the timeline is properly extended.

STATE COMPLAINT

The complaint must be a signed, written complaint that sets forth an alleged violation of the IDEA. The complaint may include a statement that the local system has violated the requirements of IDEA and the facts on which the statement is based. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year before the date the complaint is received.

Whenever a state complaint is filed, there is a right to mediation if both parties agree.
❏ State complaints are investigated by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) or its contractors. Both the complaining party and the public agency involved have the opportunity to provide information to the GaDOE during the investigation.
❏ Decisions of state complaints are issued by the GaDOE within 60 calendar days, unless extended for extenuating circumstances.
❏ The decisions of state complaints cannot be appealed.

DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT PROCESS

Only a parent, a child with a disability who has reached the age of majority, or a school system 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. For a due process complaint, an impartial due process hearing officer must hear the complaint (if it is not resolved through a resolution meeting or mediation) and issue a written decision within 45-calendar-days after the end of the resolution period, as described in this document in the section entitled “Resolution Process,” unless the hearing officer grants a specific extension of the timeline at request of either you or the school system.

DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT

The complaint must set forth an alleged violation that occurred not more than two (2) years before the date the complaining party knew or should have known about the alleged action that forms the basis for the complaint. A due process complaint is a request for a hearing to occur to resolve the matter. The two-year time limitation does not apply if the complaining party could not file a due process complaint within the timeline because: (1) the school system specifically misrepresented that it had resolved the issues identified in the complaint; or (2) the school system withheld information from the complaining party that it was required to provide to the complaining party under Part B of the IDEA.

RESPONSIBILITY TO FILE DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT NOTICE

A parent or school alleging a due process violation under IDEA, or his or her attorney, is required to provide a due process complaint notice to the other party (or their attorney) and the

GaDOE. The notice must include the name and home address of the child; the name of the school the child attends; in the case of a homeless child or youth, the child's contact information and the name of the child's school; a description of the nature of the problem; and a proposed resolution. The party presenting the due process complaint must file this notice before a due process hearing can occur.

RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT NOTICE OF THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM FOR WHICH YOU ARE FILING A DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT

If the school system feels that the parent's due process complaint notice is insufficient, the system must notify the hearing officer in writing within 15 days of receiving the complaint.

- ❏ ALJs/hearing officers then have up to 5 days to determine if the notice meets the requirements of the IDEA. Upon making a determination, the ALJ/hearing officer must immediately notify all parties in writing of the decision. If the ALJ/hearing officer determines that the complaint is sufficient, the school must respond to the due process complaint. If the ALJ/hearing officer determines that the complaint is not sufficient, the parent has the opportunity to resubmit a new complaint, and the timelines start over.

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE REGARDING THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT

When the school system receives a due process complaint notice, it must first determine whether it provided prior written notice regarding the subject matter of the due process complaint. If it had not done so, the school system must respond to the parents within 10 days of receiving the due process complaint notice. Prior written notice must contain the following:

- ❏ An explanation of why the agency proposed or refused to take the action raised in the due process complaint;
- ❏ A description of other options that the IEP Team considered and the reasons those options were rejected;
- ❏ A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the agency used as the basis for the proposed or refused action; and
- ❏ A description of the relevant factors in the school system's proposal or refusal.

RESOLUTION SESSION

Within 15 days of when a complaint is filed, the system must convene a resolution session between the parents and relevant members of the IEP Team. A resolution session provides an opportunity for parents and school systems to resolve any issues in the due process complaint so that the parents and systems can avoid a due process hearing and provide immediate benefit to the child. The resolution session must occur before a due process hearing may proceed unless both parties agree to use the mediation process or they both agree in writing to waive the resolution session and mediation.

- ❏ The session must include a representative of the school system who has decision-making authority on behalf of the school system.

❏ The session may not include an attorney for the system unless the parent is also accompanied by an attorney.
❏ The session provides an opportunity for the party who filed the due process complaint to discuss the complaint and the facts forming the basis of it, and an opportunity for the responding party to resolve the complaint.
❏ If the parties reach an agreement, they must execute a legally binding agreement that is signed by the parents and the school system representative.
❏ The agreement is enforceable in any state court of competent jurisdiction or a U.S. district court. Either party may void the agreement up to three (3) days after its execution.
❏ If the due process complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the parent within 30 days of the receipt of the complaint through this resolution session, the parties may proceed to a due process hearing.

IMPARTIAL DUE PROCESS HEARING

Whenever a due process complaint is filed, the parties have the right to an impartial due process hearing conducted by GaDOE or a contracted impartial agent of the GaDOE. The hearing may be at no cost to either party. However, each party is responsible for its costs associated with hiring legal counsel or expert witnesses, unless a court awards the recovery of such costs to the prevailing party.

Regarding due process hearings, you have the right to:

❏ Have the hearing chaired by an ALJ/hearing officer who is not employed by a public agency involved in the education of your child or otherwise personally or professionally interested in the hearing (the ALJ/hearing officer is not an employee of the agency solely because he or she is paid by the agency to serve as an ALJ/hearing officer).
❏ A list of the persons who serve as ALJs/hearing officers, including a statement of the qualifications of each of those persons.
❏ Be accompanied and advised by legal counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training concerning the problems of children with disabilities at a hearing.
❏ Be told by the local system of any free or low-cost legal and other relevant services available (e.g., an expert on disability conditions that may be a witness at the hearing) when you request information or you or the system initiates a due process complaint.
❏ An expedited due process hearing whenever you file a due process complaint regarding the manifestation of a disability
❏ Have your child present at the hearing.
❏ Have the hearing open to the public.
❏ Present evidence and confront, cross-examine, and compel the attendance of witnesses at the hearing.
❏ Have the hearing or an appeal set at a time and place reasonably convenient to you and your child

❏ At least five (5) business days prior to a hearing, each party may disclose to all other parties all evaluations completed by that date and recommendations based on the offering party's evaluations that the party intends to use at the hearing.
❏ Ask an ALJ/hearing officer to prohibit the introduction of any evidence at the hearing that has not been disclosed at least five (5) business days before the hearing.
❏ Have a written or, at your option, electronic, verbatim record of the hearing.
❏ Obtain written or, at your option, electronic findings of fact and decisions within 45 days after the resolution session period, except that the ALJ/hearing officer may grant a specific extension of time at the request of either party.
❏ The implementation of a final decision made by the ALJ/hearing officer, unless a party brings a civil action in a state court of competent jurisdiction or a U.S. district court. If a party chooses to bring a civil action, your child will remain in his or her present educational placement until the completion of all appeals unless both parties agree otherwise. Any corrective or compensatory actions required in the decision will not occur until completion of all appeals.
❏ Appeal the decision of the ALJ/hearing officer by bringing a civil action in state or federal court within 90 days from the date of the decision of the ALJ/hearing officer.
❏ Have your child remain in his or her present educational placement until completion of all hearing and appeal proceedings, unless you and the agency agree otherwise. This right does NOT apply to appeals regarding placement under discipline procedures, manifestation determinations, or when a school system believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others. During those appeals, the child must remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the ALJ/hearing officer or until the expiration of the period specified in the disciplinary code or federal law, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the State or school system agree otherwise.
❏ Have your child placed in the public school program until the completion of all the proceedings if the due process complaint involves an application for initial admission to the public school.

NOTE: You may file a state complaint or a due process complaint if you disagree with a determination by the school system that your child's behavior was not a manifestation of your child's disability.

ATTORNEYS' FEES

U.S. District Courts can award reasonable attorneys' fees to prevailing parties, whether they are a parent, SEA, or local system, as part of any settlement of a due process complaint or civil action. Attorneys' fees awarded to SEAs or local systems may only be granted under certain guidelines.

❏ The attorney of a parent may be forced to pay the public agency's attorneys' fees when that attorney files a complaint or civil action that is frivolous, unreasonable, or without foundation, or if the attorney continues to litigate after the litigation became frivolous, unreasonable, or without foundation.

❏ The parents or their attorney may be forced to pay the public agency's attorneys' fees if the parents' due process complaint or subsequent civil action was presented for any improper purpose, such as to harass, cause unnecessary delay, or needlessly increase the cost of litigation.
❏ Not all legal and administrative proceedings and services are eligible for reimbursement. A court may not award attorneys' fees for any services performed after the time of a written offer of settlement that is made to the parents if:
❏ The offer is made in accordance with Rule 68 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, or in the case of an administrative hearing, at any time more than 10 days prior to the hearing.
❏ The offer is not accepted within 10 days, and
❏ The court or administrative hearing officer finds that the relief finally obtained by the parents is not more favorable than the offer of settlement. However, attorneys' fees may be awarded to parents who were substantially justified in rejecting the settlement offer.
❏ In addition, IEP Team meetings are not eligible for reimbursement unless the meeting is convened as a result of an administrative proceeding or judicial action, or, at the discretion of the state, for a mediation session.
❏ Attorneys' fees for Resolution Sessions are also ineligible for reimbursement.

MEDIATION

Mediation may be requested by the parent, school system, or any party to disagreements related to the IDEA.

❏ Mediation may be at no cost to either party, except that either party may be responsible for the cost of an attorney or other representative or advisor.
❏ Mediation is voluntary.
❏ Mediation may not be used to deny or delay a right to a hearing.
❏ Mediations may be scheduled promptly and held in a location convenient to the parties in the dispute.
❏ Mediations may be conducted by a qualified and trained mediator who is impartial and randomly selected by the state.
❏ Discussions during mediation are confidential and may not be used as evidence in any subsequent due process hearing or civil proceeding.
❏ If the dispute is resolved in mediation, the parties must enter into and sign a legally binding agreement that sets forth the resolution.

NOTE: Resolution session agreements, mediation agreements, and due process decisions are legally binding and may be enforced through a state court of competent jurisdiction or a U.S. district court.

NOTE: Any party may also file a state complaint alleging that a resolution agreement, a mediation agreement, or a due process decision has not been carried out by the parties. The GaDOE will investigate the state complaint procedures and issue a written decision.

AREA OF GENERAL SUPERVISION V: READINESS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER

BRIDGE LAW
STATE HOUSE BILL 400

BRIDGE LAW

The BRIDGE (Building Resourceful Individuals to Develop Georgia's Economy) Act, House Bill 400, was signed into law in May 2010 to create an atmosphere motivating middle- and high-school students to learn because they see the relevance of education to their dreams and plans. The implementation of the BRIDGE Act provides middle- and high-school students with career counseling and regularly scheduled advice on choosing a focused plan of study.

SIXTH, SEVENTH, AND EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS:

❏ Middle school students may be provided counseling, advisement, career awareness, career interest inventories, and information to assist them in evaluating their academic skills and career interests
❏ Before the end of the second semester of the eighth grade, students may develop an individual graduation plan in consultation with their parents, guardians, or individuals appointed by the parents or guardians to serve as their designee. In Webster County, this is known as "Bridge Day" and is printed on the school calendar each year.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

❏ High school students may be provided guidance, advisement, and counseling annually that will enable them to complete their graduation plans, preparing them for a seamless transition to postsecondary study, further training, or employment.

Information obtained through these processes in accordance with the Bridge Law should be considered in the development of the student's Transition section of their Individual Education Plan.

AREA VI: RELATED SERVICES

RELATED SERVICES

Related services mean transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and include, but are not limited to –
❏ Audiological Services
❏ Occupational Therapy
❏ Physical Therapy
❏ Social Work Services

❏ Counseling Services
❏ Interpreting Services
❏ School Nurse Service
❏ Special Transportation

To determine what special education services and/or related services will be provided to the child, the IEP team looks at the child's present levels of academic and functional performance, measurable annual goals, and, if appropriate, the short-term objectives or benchmarks that are included in the IEP. Any services should

❏ be based on the unique needs and abilities of the child and
❏ Help the child advance appropriately toward attaining his or her annual goals.

AREA VII: SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

FACILITATE ALL MEETINGS

❏ Prepare all paperwork in a timely, efficient, and accurate fashion
❏ Gather and analyze all data related to the specified student
❏ Be prepared to provide input in Eligibility/IEP/Other Meetings
❏ Develop draft IEP (if appropriate)
❏ Develop draft Eligibility Report (if appropriate)
❏ Complete observations of the student, if required
❏ Facilitate all meetings with professionalism

MAINTAIN CASELOAD STUDENT FILES

❏ Maintain folders in a neat and orderly manner, with the most current paperwork on top and all paperwork secured
❏ Keep all folders in a LOCKED cabinet when not in use
❏ Maintain student confidentiality – only school personnel working directly with the student can have access to confidential records.

KNOW YOUR STUDENT'S IEP

❏ A student's IEP is reviewed at least once annually, but may have been or need to be amended during the school year. Keep track of student progress to make sure the current placement and IEP are appropriate.
❏ Progress Monitoring is required. COLLECT DATA on all IEP goals as well as BIPs.
❏ Read IEPs from beginning to end to make sure you know all the specifics.
❏ Make sure IEPs are fully and accurately implemented.
❏ Support general education teachers and related service providers working with the students on your caseload.

REMAIN IN COMPLIANCE

❏ Monitor your GO-IEP Dashboard Weekly.
❏ Review all of the IEP and 3-year Re-Evaluation dates before the first day of school. When possible, plan to hold reevaluation meetings at the same time as your annual review meetings (do not let IEPs or Eligibilities expire). Organize yourself to be sure all meetings are held on time.
❏ IEP meeting must be held at least annually and prior to the ending date of the current IEP.
❏ Re-evaluation conferences must be held prior to the Eligibility due date. You may be planning to recommend that the student continue to meet eligibility; however, the parent or other IEP committee participant may see the need for a new comprehensive evaluation. You must have the meeting in advance to be sure there is time to complete the evaluation and eligibility process if needed.
❏ If the IEP or Re-Evaluation meeting(s) are due during August or September for the following school year, you will need to hold these meetings prior to the end of the current school year,

before the student transitions to a new teacher or new school. There are no exceptions to this rule.
❏ Provide all teachers and Administrators a copy of the current Behavior Intervention Plan (if applicable). Provide all teachers directly involved with the student a copy of the current IEP accommodations (an At A Glance Form is available in the Accommodations folder in the Sped Shared Drive. Note: Teachers have access to READ ONLY through SLDS to view the IEPs of their students.
❏ IEP goals will be monitored twice monthly, and IEP progress reports will be completed and provided to parents every 9 weeks based on the start date of the IEP.

VIII: QUICK GUIDE REFERENCES

❏ All documents will be reviewed by the Special Education Director in folders and GoIEP.

❏ Meetings for re-eligibilities, redetermination conferences, and annual reviews are required to be scheduled at least 2 weeks before the due date.

❏ Initial eligibility and initial placement IEP meetings are required to be scheduled at least 1 week prior to the due date.

❏ Case managers should prepare a draft IEP prior to the meeting.

❏ When the IEP annual review meeting is held, the teacher must complete the IEP progress report for the previous IEP and mark goals as achieved. If the goal is not achieved, comment in the comment section regarding this information.

❏ Corrections are required to be completed within 5 days of receiving the emailed compliance requirement correction requests.

❏ Once documents are completed, the case manager should mail or send a copy to the parent.

QUICK GUIDE: STEPS TO THE EVALUATION PROCESS

1. The SST committee makes a referral to Tier 4 by completing referral paperwork in the SST meeting. Before the referral, the Director of Special Education should review the progress monitoring data to ensure that all interventions have been implemented with fidelity. The Director of Special Education will send home a parental consent to evaluate packet once SST referral paperwork is received in the special education office. Parental consent is received from the parent, and the 60-day calendar timeline begins on the day signed consent is received in the special education office. Any consent signed with more than 30 school days remaining in the calendar year must be completed within the 60-day timeline.

2. On most occasions, Hearing/Vision has been completed during the RTI process. Please check the date and results of the H/V screening to be sure it is current (within one year). When H/V clearance is received, then the evaluation process can continue.

3. RTI should continue during the evaluation process, and data continues to be collected.

4. A designated person will need to conduct classroom observation and collect samples of student work for the area(s) of suspected disability. A summary is written, and classroom samples are analyzed to be included in the eligibility report.

5. Upon completion of the evaluation, a psychological report is written by the school psychologist and submitted to and/or reviewed with the special education director, special education teacher, and parent.

6. Eligibility meeting is set up, giving parents 7-10 days prior notice when possible.

7. Hold a meeting to determine eligibility and write an eligibility report.

*NOTE: If a student has been identified as a student with a suspected disability and is subject to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be expedited. This holds true for students in RTI and/or Due Process.

QUICK GUIDE TO GO-IEP

❏Log into Powerschool, click applications, Georgia LDS, IEP teacher, IEP
❏ Click Caseload to view the students on your caseload. *Lead teachers will be able to view all special education teachers' caseloads at their school.
❏ Click Caseload→ student name to initiate the process of completing paperwork.
❏ Profile
    ❏ Student and School Information: Review the Student and School Information page. Check for errors. Notify the Special Education Director if there are errors.
    ❏ Parents/ Guardians: Enter the parents' contact information. Make sure that it is consistent with PowerSchool.
❏ Team Members: Use the drop-down boxes to add the appropriate team members.
    ❏ “System Users” to locate special education teachers, therapists, and SPED admins
    ❏ “Parents/ Guardians” to add the parents of the students.
    ❏ “Other” to enter any additional team members, including the required LEA and general education teachers. For the LEA / General Education Teacher requirement, you can enter the title as the name. For example: Last Name: General Education Teacher First Name: General Education Teacher.
❏ Timelines: All documents will be generated from the timelines page.
    ❏ Start IEP Annual Review
    ❏ Start Redetermination
    ❏ Initial Consent for Evaluation Form (will only come from the special education office)
    ❏ Initial Special Education Eligibility
    ❏ Initial IEP meeting
❏ Meeting Notice
    ❏ Complete the meeting notice form, including date, time, location, purpose, procedural safeguards, and meeting attendees. Meeting roles must be assigned to the LEA, Parent, General Education Teacher, and Special Education Teacher
    ❏ Submit
    ❏ Print meeting notice. The IEP meeting notice will be provided to the parent/guardian 7-10 days prior to the meeting, whenever possible.
❏ Eligibility Tab
    ❏ Follow the GO-IEP format and complete all sections required. Special Education Teachers are responsible for completing the case history, progress monitoring, state assessments, student data (see specifics), decision making, eligibilities to consider, exclusionary factors, and considerations and determination.
    ❏ Student Data:
    ❏The Case Manager will complete the parent information, observation, progress monitoring, and work sample sections of the student data sections. Academic achievement, adaptive behavior, communication, intellectual functioning, medical, motor, psychological processing, sensory, sensory processing, and social/ emotional sections.

- ❏ The Speech Language Pathologist will input all speech-related data and determinations.

❏ Audit

- ❏ Complete the audit and correct any errors before printing the draft copy.
- ❏ Select the meeting attendees and save.
- ❏ Select the appropriate forms that were provided at the meeting.
- ❏ Save and finalize once you have checked through everything. Please ask the Special Education Director if you are unsure.

❏ IEP

- ❏ Follow the GO-IEP format (IEP Process) and complete all sections of the IEP.
- ❏ Make sure to complete the progress report for the current IEP, documenting mastery.
- ❏ Audit the IEP and correct initial errors prior to printing a draft for review.
- ❏ Meeting notes can only be entered upon a clear audit.
- ❏ Select the IEP team members who attended the meeting.
- ❏ Select the appropriate forms that were provided at the meeting.
- ❏ Save and finalize once you have checked through everything. Please ask the Special Education Director if you are unsure

❏ LOG

- ❏ Access Log will keep time-stamped records of all entries into GO-IEP.
- ❏ Contact Log: Document ALL contacts made to a parent (written, phone, email, in-person reminder, etc) regarding meetings and/or IEP concerns.
- ❏ Documents
- ❏ Upload and label signed documents to the documents tab. Documents are listed on the “Go-IEP Document Upload Cheat Sheet.”

QUICK GUIDE: Accessing the Special Education Shared Drive

Log in to your email

❏ In the window pane, select DRIVE:

❏ On the right side of the screen, select “Shared Drive.”

❏ Click on the Drive labeled “Special Education Webster”. You will find many resources and forms within the folders.

Verification Form

By signing this document, I certify that I have read and understand the procedures outlined in the special education procedures guide.

_____ _____

Signature Date

Please print and turn this page into your special education director before August 30th.