

QUILCENE SCHOOL DISTRICT



Special Services Handbook

September 2021

Special Services Staff

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My child is struggling at school. What supports are available to help him/her?

Through a multi-tiered system of support there are many options available to support your child both academically and non-academically. In a multi-tiered system of support there are three tiers. A multi-tier approach is used to efficiently differentiate instruction for all students by increasing the intensity of instruction offering specific, research-based interventions matched to student needs.

Some supports that may be available to support your child include:

- Interventions by general education teacher
- Learning Assistance Program
- Title 1 (brick and mortar only)
- Student Success Team
- Section 504
- Special Education

GENERAL EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS

Purpose: provide interventions closely related to core instruction in the general education setting.

How do teachers know which students need intervention?

All students receive high-quality and research-based instruction in the general education classroom. This instruction is aligned with Washington Learning Standards to ensure students are at the expected standard at the end of the school year. Teachers use a variety of means to identify students who are struggling both academically and non-academically. Some of these include:

- Universal Screener (MAP or EasyCBM) to identify students who may be at-risk
- Diagnostic assessments to further determine the learning needs
- Classwork, unit tests
- SBA (state assessment)
- Observations

What do interventions in the general education setting look like?

Interventions in the general education setting take place in a variety of ways. In addition to receiving the core instruction, students may receive supplemental instruction in the classroom. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Scaffolds to enhance student learning and aid in the mastery of skills in the core curriculum
- Universal Design for Learning
- Reteaching of core material
- Small group instruction targeting specific skill deficits using core or supplemental materials

What do interventions in PEARL look like?

Interventions for students attending PEARL look different than for a student attending the Brick and Mortar campus. In addition to receiving the core instruction, interventions may include, but is not limited to teachers assisting parents with:

- Identifying appropriate scaffolds to enhance student learning and aid in the mastery of skills in the core curriculum
- Finding supplemental materials to reteach a concept from the core material
- Identifying and implementing instructional techniques best matched to the child's learning style
- Brief tutoring session with the teacher

How do we know if the interventions are working?

Universal screeners and progress monitoring provide information about a student's learning rate and level of achievement. The information obtained is used to look individually and compared to their peer group. Universal screeners are given two to three times per year to all students while progress monitoring may be done every 2-4 weeks for students receiving

intervention in the general education class. This information is used to make decisions regarding the student's instructional needs and gauge the effectiveness of interventions. The length of time students receive intervention lasts for approximately 8 weeks, but your child may need more or less time. The goal is to have Approximately 80% of students are successful receiving instruction in their general education classroom.

My child has been receiving interventions but there is little improvement. What is my next step?

If progress monitoring data shows that your child is making little to no progress, he or she may be referred to the Student Success Team (SST) by a teacher, administrator or parent. Typically, the student's teacher will initiate a meeting or phone conference with the parent/guardian to discuss his/her concerns about the student's progress. Other times, the parent/guardian might request a parent/teacher conference if they have a concern. Together, you will come up with strategies to address those concerns. If, after a sufficient period of time to implement the strategies, the concerns persist a referral to the SST for more support should be made by the teacher, administrator or parent.

LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LAP)

Purpose: district-wide program that provides supplemental instruction and services to students who are not meeting academic standards in ELA and mathematics to increase academic growth during the period of time they receive service services.

What do LAP services look like?

Services include both academic and nonacademic support that focus on accelerating student growth to make progress towards grade level standards. While no longer required by law, the Quilcene School District provides services based on OSPI's Menu of Best Practices and uses tutors to support student learning.

LAP services supplement core instruction - they do not replace it. Each student will have an intervention plan outlining learning goals for the duration the student receives LAP services. Based on the intensity needed for your child's intervention, services may be provided in the following ways:

- Pre-teaching or reteaching of core material
- Small group instruction targeting specific skill deficits using core or supplemental materials in or outside of the classroom
- Small group or 1:1 instruction targeting specific skill deficits using intervention materials outside of the classroom

Who is eligible for LAP services?

Students are identified for LAP services using multiple means of measure, including SBA scores, MAP or EasyCBM scores, classroom based measures and teacher/parent recommendations. LAP services are designed to support students who are most in need of intensive intervention in order to meet standard. The district's priorities for LAP services during the 2021-2022 school year include:

1. 5-9 literacy
2. K-4 literacy
3. 6-8 math

This is a grant funded program and supports are limited to the allocated funding. Students are identified for supports through the special services department.

How do we know if the interventions are working?

Universal screeners and progress monitoring provide information about a student's learning rate and level of achievement. The information obtained is used to look individually and compared to their peer group. Universal screeners are given two to three times per year to all students while progress monitoring may be done every 1-2 weeks for students receiving LAP

intervention. LAP staff and general education teachers meet and use the last six data points to make decisions regarding the student's instructional needs and gauge the effectiveness of interventions. The length of time students receive intervention lasts for approximately 9-12 weeks, but your child may need more or less time.

My child has been receiving interventions but there is little improvement. What is my next step?

If progress monitoring data shows that your child is making little to no progress, he or she may be referred to the Student Success Team (SST) by a teacher, administrator or parent. Typically, the student's teacher will initiate a meeting or phone conference with the parent/guardian to discuss his/her concerns about the student's progress. Other times, the parent/guardian might request a parent/teacher conference if they have a concern. Together, you will come up with strategies to address those concerns. If, after a sufficient period of time to implement the strategies, the concerns persist, a referral to the SST for more support should be made by the teacher, administrator or parent.

TITLE 1A (*Brick and Mortar Only*)

Purpose: provide academic services to children who are identified as failing or at risk for failing to meet state standards.

What do Title 1A services look like?

Services include academic supports that focus on accelerating student growth to make progress towards grade level standards. Quilcene School District provides services based on OSPI's Menu of Best Practices and use tutors to support student learning.

Title 1A services supplement core instruction - it does not replace it. Each student will have an intervention plan outlining learning goals for the duration the student receives Title 1A services. Based on the intensity needed for your child's intervention, services may be provided in the following ways:

- Pre-teaching or reteaching of core material
- Small group instruction targeting specific skill deficits using core or supplemental materials in or outside of the classroom
- Small group or 1:1 instruction targeting specific skill deficits using intervention materials outside of the classroom

Who is eligible for Title 1A services?

Students are identified for Title 1A services using multiple means of measure, including SBA scores, MAP, classroom based measures and teacher/parent recommendations. Title 1A services are designed to support students who are failing, or at risk of failing. The district's priority for Title 1A services during the 2021-2022 school year is K-8 literacy.

This is a grant funded program and supports are limited to the allocated funding. Students are identified for supports through the special services department.

How do we know if the interventions are working?

Universal screeners and progress monitoring provide information about a student's learning rate and level of achievement. The information obtained is used to look individually and compared to their peer group. Universal screeners are given two to three times per year to all students while progress monitoring may be done every 1-2 weeks for students receiving LAP intervention. LAP staff and general education teachers meet and use the last six data points to make decisions regarding the student's instructional needs and gauge the effectiveness of interventions. The length of time students receive intervention lasts for approximately 9-12 weeks, but your child may need more or less time.

My child has been receiving interventions but there is little improvement. What is my next step?

If progress monitoring data shows that your child is making little to no progress, he or she may be referred to the Student Success Team (SST) by a teacher, administrator or parent. Typically, the student's teacher will initiate a meeting or phone conference with the parent/guardian to discuss his/her concerns about the student's progress. Other times, the parent/guardian might request a parent/teacher conference if they have a concern. Together, you will come up with strategies to address those concerns. If, after a sufficient period of time to implement the strategies, the concerns persist, a referral to the SST for more support should be made by the teacher, administrator or parent.

STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM

Purpose: to design a support system for students having difficulty in the general education classroom.

What is the Student Success Team (SST)?

The SST is a group formed within the school to further examine a student's academic, behavioral and social-emotional progress. The team consists of:

- Parent
- Student (if age appropriate)
- SST coordinator
- Administrator
- Teacher familiar with intervention best practices
- Student's general education teacher
- Other staff as appropriate (OT, SLP, PT, etc.)

The SST process supports general education teachers as they work with struggling students to identify their needs prior to a referral for evaluation of more specialized instructional supports.

The SST is a positive school-wide early identification and early intervention process. During the SST meeting, the team will discuss student concerns and end by creating an intervention action plan utilizing best practices to support the student. In order to develop this plan, the SST will explore the following:

- Student strengths (both academic and non-academic)
- Background information, including, but not limited to:
 - Retention or previous school attendance
 - Family information such as changes in the family structure, primary caregivers, moving, other stressors that may be impacting the student, etc.)
 - Any medical conditions that may impact the student's academic and non-academic success
- Access to grade level standards
 - Curriculum
 - Supplemental curriculum
- Academic and/or non-academic data, including, but not limited to:
 - Test scores (SBA, MAP, EasyCBM, etc.)
 - Progress monitoring of area(s) of concern
 - Rate of progress toward grade level standards
 - Rate of progress to meet grade level standards
- Prior interventions and their effectiveness
 - Interventions must be research-based

As a regular school process, the SST develops recommendations that will facilitate the student's success within his or her current program. The team creates a plan with measurable, targeted

interventions for the student, parents, and/or teacher to support academic growth and a positive learning experience.

What is my role in the SST process?

You know your child best! Parents and guardians are the first and foremost source of information about their children. Your insight into his/her background and behaviors at home is a critical part of viewing the whole child. Be prepared to share your child's strengths - both academic and non-academic - as well as any concerns you may have. SSTs are most successful when the teacher(s) and parents work together to set similar expectations for learning and behavior for a student.

What kind of recommendations might be on the intervention action plan?

The SST meeting defines the problem of practice and team members use a brainstorming process to generate recommendations for the teacher and/or parent/guardian concerns. Individual goals are identified so the team is clear on what we are working toward. Recommendations are unique to the individual student and vary based on that student's need. Some possible recommendations may include:

- Different instructional and/or behavioral strategies
- Intervention curriculum used to supplement (not supplant) the general education curriculum
- Accommodations
- Positive Behavior Intervention Plan
- Token economy
- Refer as available for school-based services such as counseling, academic intervention programs, mental health counseling, SBHC, etc.
- Assist parent/guardian in finding supports available through community resources
- Refer for a Section 504 referral
- As a last resort, the SST can refer to the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) for consideration of a special education evaluation

Can the SST refer students to be considered for a special education evaluation?

Yes, but certain criteria should be met first:

- Research-based classroom/instructional interventions of sufficient duration have been attempted with fidelity and without success. There should be a minimum of seven data points used to inform decisions.
- The cause of the problem is suspected to be a disability that cannot be mediated without specially designed instruction.

What happens next?

A follow up SST meeting will be scheduled in 4-6 weeks for the team to review progress based on the intervention action plan the team created.

The team may revise the intervention action plan based on the new data. If research-based interventions have been implemented with fidelity and the student is still not making progress toward grade level standards, the SST may opt to refer the student to the MDT for a special education evaluation.

Students who are having a positive response to intervention should continue to receive intervention and be monitored. If a student begins to stop responding to intervention, staff members or parents can request another SST meeting.

Do all referrals for special education need to go through the SST?

Typically, yes, all referrals should go through the SST process. However, the SST process can be bypassed for students for whom it would be detrimental or for students whose difficulty is so severe or unusual that it renders the need for an evaluation. This is a decision to be made by the school with parent input.

As a problem-solving process, the SST is a crucial step prior to a special education referral. It ensures that all that can be tried in the general education environment has been tried. Only those students who have not shown a positive response to the SST intervention strategies should be referred for special education evaluation.

SECTION 504

Purpose: to provide accommodations to assist students with a disability to participate in and benefit from their education, including all programs and activities sponsored by the school.

Section 504 defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities are activities that are important to most people's daily lives.

How Do I Get Accommodations for My Child?

Source: [OSPI Equity and Civil Rights Office, Student's Rights: Section 504 and Students with Disabilities](#)

To determine whether or not a student needs a 504 plan, the school must follow these three steps: refer, bring a 504 team together, and evaluate.

1. Request a Referral for Evaluation

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, can refer a student for evaluation. A Section 504 referral should be in writing and ask that the school evaluate whether or not a student has a disability and needs accommodations, aids, and services. Schools have a special responsibility to make a Section 504 referral for every student they know or suspect has a disability and may need accommodations, aids, or services.

2. School Brings a 504 Team Together

The individual needs of the student determine who joins the 504 team. There are three core members of any 504 team:

- Someone who knows the student
- Someone who can analyze and interpret the evaluation data.
- Someone who is knowledgeable about placement options at the school.

3. 504 Team Evaluates

The school must have consent from a parent or guardian before the evaluation begins. Without consent, a 504 team cannot evaluate a student or continue the 504 process.

First, the 504 team gathers and analyzes data about the student's condition. Evaluation data should come from a variety of sources. Grades, test scores, attendance, health room visits, parent and student input, teacher observations, medical or psychological evaluations, special education data, and medical information are just a few examples.

The 504 team should collect data that answers these two questions:

1. Does the student have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activity?

2. If so, what accommodations, aids, and services—if any—does the student need to access and benefit from their education?

Evaluation and the Role of a Medical Diagnosis

There are three important ideas parents should understand about a medical diagnosis:

- A school cannot require a parent to provide a medical diagnosis to evaluate a student. However, a diagnosis can provide very helpful information for the 504 team.

- A medical diagnosis does not always mean that a student needs a 504 plan. Doctors cannot **prescribe** a 504 plan—only the 504 team can make that decision. However, the 504 team must consider the information a doctor provides when evaluating a student.

4. 504 Plan

If the evaluation indicates that the student has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activity, the team determines whether or not the student needs a 504 plan.

The plan describes the accommodations, aids, and services the school must provide to make sure the student can experience a free and appropriate public education, as the law requires.

The school must have consent from a parent or guardian before staff take action on the 504 plan.

With the 504 plan in place, all school staff members follow the plan to accommodate the student. It is the school's responsibility—not the student's or parent's—to make sure teachers are aware of the services, aids, or accommodations in the plan.

Teachers should consult the district's Section 504 coordinator if they need help or clarification on what to do for the student.

5. School Reviews and Evaluates the 504 Plan

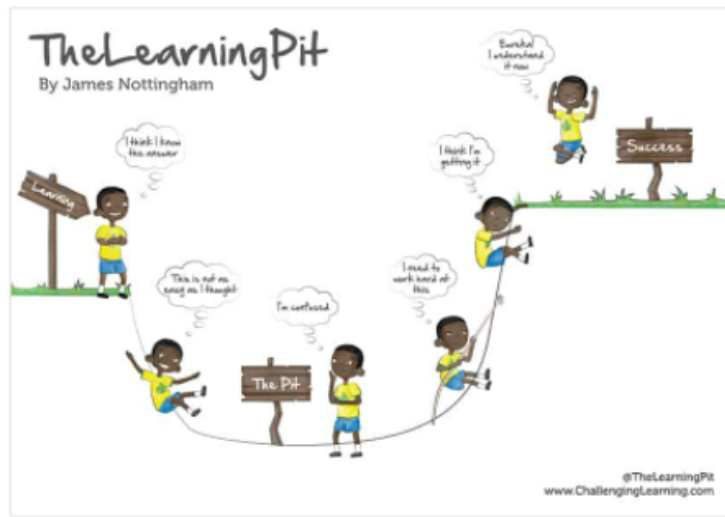
Every year, the school should review the 504 plan to make sure it continues to address the student's needs. However, a parent or teacher could ask for a review at any time if they think the plan is not meeting the student's needs.

Periodically, the 504 team must re-evaluate the student's eligibility for Section 504 and the accommodations, aids, or services in the 504 plan. This re-evaluation should take place at least once every three years, but can happen more frequently; it depends on the student's needs.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Purpose: to provide individualized programming to students with disabilities who require specially designed instruction.

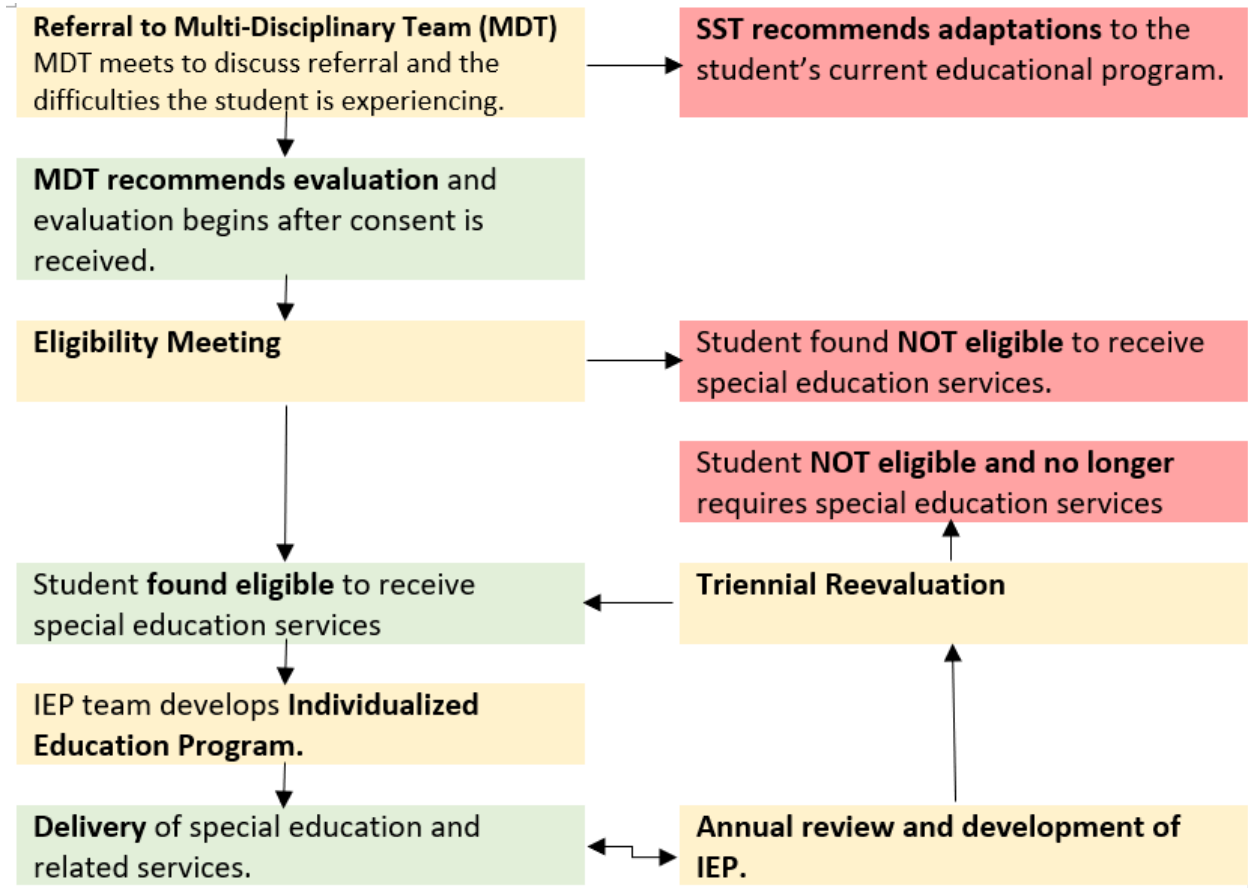
Many children experience struggles in school. The art of learning requires children to go through what is called “The Learning Pit.” With appropriate instruction, scaffolds, and accommodations, most children are able to climb out of the learning pit.



However, some students exhibit extreme difficulty getting out of the learning pit and may have a disability that requires specially designed instruction to mediate the learning difficulties. When a student is suspected of having a difficulty, they may be referred to determine eligibility for special education services.

It is important for parents to understand the eligibility process, timelines and rights governing your child during this process.

Special Education Eligibility Process



REFERRAL

If a student fails to make progress with research-based classroom interventions that have been attempted with fidelity, or if the cause of the problem is suspected to be a disability that cannot be mediated without specially designed instruction, a student may be referred to the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT). The MDT is usually composed of the:

- Parent
- School psychologist
- SST facilitator
- General education teacher
- Special education teacher
- Administrator
- Specialists (OT, SLP, Vision, PT, nurse, etc.) as necessary

The MDT will review all data including, but not limited to:

- Team concerns
- SST notes
- Parent input
- Student strengths
- Classroom data (grades, progress monitoring, attendance, discipline etc.)
- Duration and effect of interventions
- Relevant medical, developmental, and health history

Referrals for special education must be made in writing. Within 25 school days of receiving a written referral, the MDT must make a determination whether or not to evaluate the student. Parents will receive a Prior Written Notice (PWN) indicating the decision.

EVALUATION

Before the initial evaluation can begin, signed parent consent must be obtained. After consent has been received, the district has 35 school days to evaluate all areas of suspected disability and hold an evaluation team meeting to determine eligibility.

During the evaluation, a variety of assessment tools will be used to gather relevant information about your child to determine eligibility status and qualifying service areas in the IEP.

Once the evaluation has been completed, a meeting will be held to review your child's evaluation report. During the meeting, the team will review the results from any assessments conducted and additional information gathered through record reviews or provided by the parent to make a determination on whether or not the child is eligible for special education.

All students eligible for special education services must be reevaluated to determine continued eligibility every three years.

CONSENT

If it is determined that your child has a disability and is in need of special education services, then your child is eligible for special education. Before special education services can begin, however, parent consent is required. Once you give consent, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be developed for your child.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

Within 30 calendar days of being found eligible for special education, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be developed and implemented. In order to create a holistic plan to support your child, the following IEP team members are required to attend IEP meetings:

- Parent
- Student (minimum of 15 years old or older, but it is best practice to include all students)

- General education teacher (if your child is, or may be, participating in a general education classroom)
- Special education teacher
- LEA (a person who is qualified to deliver, or supervise, specially designed instruction and knowledgeable about available resources)
- Service providers or other persons who are knowledgeable about your child and their needs

This plan will identify learning goals, accommodations, modifications and other supports to support your child’s academic and non-academic program and also designate how these services and supports will be delivered. Services will begin as soon as the IEP is initiated. While there is no specific timeline, IEPs are most often initiated within five days after the IEP meeting. This ensures that parents have an opportunity to review and think about the draft IEP before it is implemented.

A minimum of once per year, the IEP team will reconvene to review progress toward your child’s goal, develop and/or revise the IEP, determine the placement or setting where your child will receive his/her special education services.

An IEP meeting can be requested by parents or any team member at any time.

CONTINUUM OF SERVICES AND LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

During the IEP meeting, the team will determine where the best location is for your child to receive their special education services. One of the defining principles of special education law is that students with disabilities should be included in the general education program and with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent possible. The removal from the general education environment only occurs if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in the general education classes cannot be achieved satisfactorily. This is called the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and is determined by the IEP team.

The continuum of services available in the Quilcene School District include, but is not limited to:

- General education class
 - Consultation → case manager or specialist consults with general education teacher and offers suggestions to meet student needs
 - Co-teaching → general and special education teachers co-teach bringing expertise to the classroom through shared responsibility and accountability
 - Push in services → special education teacher or paraprofessional, delivers specially designed instruction in the general education classroom
- General education classes with support services and/or modifications
- A combination of general education and special education classes
- Self-contained special education classes
- Placements outside of the school district
- Home instruction

In order to determine the appropriate level of service and LRE, the IEP team must address the following:

- The content of the IEP (i.e. present levels of performance, goals, accommodations, etc.)
- The LRE requirements
- The likelihood that the placement option will provide a reasonably high probability of assisting your student to attain her/his annual goals (i.e. progress monitoring, rate of growth, level of support, etc.)
- The consideration of any potentially harmful effects that the placement option might have on your child or on the quality of services that your child needs (i.e. present levels of performance, etc.)

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE

After every IEP team meeting, the district will provide you with a prior notice. This notice is provided *after* a decision has been made affecting your student's IEP or eligibility for special education, but *before* that decision is implemented or changes to your child's program take place. At a minimum, you will receive a PWN after every evaluation and IEP meeting.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Staff use progress monitoring to assess your child's progress toward each of their goals and make informed instructional decisions throughout the year. During the IEP meeting, the team will identify the frequency progress will be reported to parents. Progress reports must be provided, at a minimum, the same rate that progress is reported for all students in the school; however, the IEP team can opt to increase the frequency of progress reports to ensure that parents have meaningful input into their child's educational programming.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

Schools are required to provide parents/guardians of a student eligible for, or referred for, special education with a notice containing a full explanation of the rights available to them,

Districts must provide parents a copy of the [Notice of Special Education Procedural Safeguards](#):

- At least once every school year;
- When your student is referred to be evaluated for special education eligibility;
- The first time you file a citizen complaint in a school year;
- The first time you request a due process hearing in a school year;
- When a decision is made to remove a student for more than ten school days in a year as part of a disciplinary action, and that removal constitutes a change of placement; and/or
- Upon request.