

CHILD FIND POLICY

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

This child find responsibility shall be accomplished through a district-wide process which, while not a definitive or final judgment of a student's capabilities or disability, is a possible indicator of special education needs. Final identification of students with disabilities and programming for such students occurs only after an appropriate evaluation and a determination by the Pupil Evaluation Team.

As part of this child find responsibility, Saco School Department shall identify, locate and evaluate all students enrolled in public school, private schools, or home schools, including all entering Kindergarten students and transfer students at any grade level.

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

If the child find process indicates that a student may require special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education, the student shall be referred to the Pupil Evaluation Team to determine the student's eligibility for special education services.

School staff, parents, or agency representatives may refer students to the Pupil Evaluation Team if they believe that the student, because of a disability, may be in need of special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education.

Some factors that may be considered when making a referral might include whether the student has accumulated 45 absences during a school year, has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons in excess of 10 cumulative school days in the school year, or has experienced an illness, hospitalization, or accident that may indicate a need for special education and supportive services. These considerations are guidelines only, and do not mandate or preclude referral to the Pupil Evaluation Team.

References: 34C.F.R. & 300.125 (1999); Me. Dep't of Educ. Reg. Ch. 101 & 7.1 to 7.10 (1999).

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SACO SCHOOL DEPARTMENT