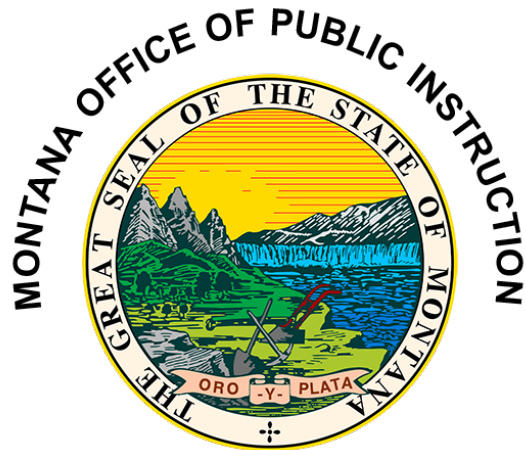


PROGRAM NARRATIVE

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE CONDUCT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TO ADDRESS THE REQUIREMENTS OF 34 CFR 300.201 OF IDEA



Review/Revision Date: _____
District/Cooperative Name: _____
Completed by: _____

In the case that the Program Narrative is written and submitted by a cooperative or consortium, it is the responsibility of the cooperative/consortium to provide a copy of the final/approved Program Narrative to each of its member districts.

Each cooperative/consortium and individual district shall ensure adherence to these written policies and procedures; districts will utilize guidance and support from the cooperative/consortium. It is the responsibility of each individual district to identify what, if any, additional procedures are implemented by the district and to notify the cooperative/consortium by providing a written copy.



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Entity Description

Local Educational Agency (LEA)

Cooperative
(list member districts)

Consortium
(list member districts)



Program Narrative

34 CFR 300.201

The LEA, in providing for the education of children with disabilities within its jurisdiction, must have in effect policies, procedures, and programs that are consistent with the State policies and procedures established under [CFR 300.101 through 300.163, and 300.165 through 300.174](#).

ARM 10.16.3220

- (1) Each local educational agency or education cooperative must have on file with the Superintendent of Public Instruction a written program narrative that describes policies and procedures used for the provision of special education and related services within the local educational agency or education cooperative. The policies, procedures, and services in the narrative shall be consistent with state policies and address the requirements of [CFR 300.101 through 300.163, and 300.165 through 300.174](#).
- (2) If a local educational agency participates in an education cooperative under [20-7-451](#) and [20-7-457](#), MCA, the local educational agency must submit a single program narrative through the cooperative.

Each cooperative must attach/include individual district policies and procedures if different than those of the cooperative.

Authorizing statute(s): [20-7-402](#)

MCA Implementing statute(s): [20-7-403](#), [20-7-414](#)



SECTION I: Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Definition of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) [34 CFR 300.17](#)

FAPE [34 CFR 300.101](#)

The IDEA requires that a FAPE is available to all eligible children with disabilities residing in the state, between the ages of 3 and 21, inclusive, including children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school. [34 CFR 300.101](#). Pursuant to the [August 13, 2025 Order](#) from the United States District Court for the District of Montana and OPI's [Updated Graduation Guidance Regarding FAPE](#), Montana is obligated to ensure a FAPE is made available to students with disabilities until they turn 22 years old. Therefore, Montana LEAs must make a FAPE available to students with disabilities until they turn 22 years old.

In the space provided, input a detailed description of local implementation. Include the following areas:

- [34 CFR 300.104](#) Residential placement (ARM [10.16.3341](#), [10.20.106](#), MCA [20-7-436](#))
- [34 CFR 300.105](#) Assistive technology (MCA [20-7-411\(6\)](#))
- [34 CFR 300.106](#) Extended School Year Services (ARM [10.16.3324](#))
- [34 CFR 300.107](#) Nonacademic services ([34 CFR 300.113](#))
- [34 CFR 300.108](#) Physical Education ([34 CFR 300.114](#), [34 CFR 300.117](#))
- [34 CFR 300.110](#) Program options (art, music, industrial arts, etc.)
- [34 CFR 300.113](#) Routine checking of hearing aids and external components of surgically implanted medical devices (ARM [10.16.3122](#))

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SECTION II: Full Educational Opportunity Goal (FEOG)

[34 CFR 300.107](#)

[34 CFR 300.109](#)

[34 CFR 300.110](#)

[34 CFR 300.201](#)

If the program narrative is for a cooperative or for multiple districts, each district's policy must be provided; the written procedures of the individual district must identify what, if any, differences in procedures are implemented by that district.

Please provide a detailed description of the district's current policy or policies that identify the age range for which education is provided to all students.



SECTION III: Child Find

[34 CFR 300.111](#)

[ARM 10.16.3125](#) ; [10.60.101](#), [10.60.103](#)

[34 CFR 131](#)

Authorizing statute(s): [Sec. 20-2-121, MCA](#)

Implementing statute(s): [Sec. 20-7-402, MCA](#)

Child find is the affirmative, ongoing obligation of states to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities residing within the jurisdiction who require special education and related services. [34 CFR 300.111\(a\)\(1\)\(i\)](#).

Each program narrative must include written procedures that ensure that all children with disabilities residing within the boundaries of the LEA, including children with disabilities who are homeless children or are wards of the State, and children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are required special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated. The requirements apply to highly mobile children with disabilities and children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education, even though they are advancing from grade to grade.

Each local educational agency shall establish procedures consistent with the requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and state administrative rules to ensure that all students with disabilities living within the boundaries of the local educational agency regardless of the severity of their disability are identified, located, and evaluated including a practical method to determine which students are currently receiving needed special education and related services. [ARM 10.16.3125\(1\)](#)

In the space provided, insert a detailed description of local implementation. Include the following areas:

- Annual procedures used to inform the public of child find activities for children birth through age 21 (include the job title of coordinator).
- Procedures and practices used for collecting, maintaining, and reporting data on child identification.
- Take into account audiological, health, speech/language, and visual screening and review of data or records for students who have been or are being considered for retention, delayed admittance, long-term suspension or expulsion or waiver of learner outcomes, describe the procedures for child find activities in each of the following age groups. Include in the description the role and responsibilities, if any, of other public or private agencies.



Notice of Child Find

Infants and Toddlers (Birth-age 2)

Describe procedures for referral of infants and toddlers to the appropriate early intervention agency or procedures for conducting Child Find.



Children Transitioning from Part C to B (age 2)

Describe procedures for staff participation in Part C transition planning conferences; indicate frequency and location of screening; describe efforts to coordinate with other agencies. Include/upload a copy of any Interagency Agreements or Memorandums of Understanding regarding Part C to B transition, follow-up procedures for referral and evaluation, and procedures for responding to individual referrals.



Preschool (ages 3-5) and In-School (ages 6-18)

- Referral procedures, including teacher assistance teams.
- Parent referrals or referrals from public or private agencies. Include follow-up procedures for referral and evaluations. In the case of a preschool child, referrals may also come from preschool screening activities that reach out to the community at large, including private and home preschools and daycares, as well as local Head Start programs.
 - Include a description of the procedures the district uses to ensure that all initial evaluations are conducted within the 60-day timeline established in [34 CFR 300.301\(c\)](#).
 - Identify the procedure used for SLD identification (RTI and/or Discrepancy)
 - If the district uses RTI in the identification of a severe learning disability, the district must identify the subject area(s) (math, reading, and language arts) and include which grades.

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Post-School (ages 19-21)

Individuals who have not graduated from high school with a regular diploma and who were not previously identified. Include in your description efforts to coordinate with other agencies.

Parentally Placed Private/Non-public School

Child find procedures addressing the provisions of ARM [10.16.3125\(3\)](#); and follow-up procedures for referral and evaluation.

As outlined, _____ ensures that the RTI process does not delay the evaluation of a student with a suspected disability. The area(s) of suspected delay/concern are identified in the evaluation plan.



SECTION IV: Evaluations, Eligibility Determinations, Individualized Education Programs, and Educational Placements

Parental Consent

[34 CFR 300.300](#)

Parental consent for evaluation and the implementation of services as outlined in [CFR 300.300](#).

In the space provided, insert a detailed description of local implementation outlining the practice in place for obtaining parental consent.



Evaluations and Reevaluations

Evaluation Procedures

[34 CFR 300.304](#)

The IDEA regulations require the Evaluation Team to assess the student in any area of suspected disability. This means that the Evaluation Team must conduct the assessments necessary to address the disability criteria for each suspected disability.

Screening

[34 CFR 300.302](#)

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

Initial Evaluations

[34 CFR 300.301](#)

Each public agency must conduct a full and individual initial evaluation before the initial provision of special education and related services to a child with a disability.



Reevaluations

34 CFR 300.303

Reevaluations must occur at least once every three years, unless the parent and the district agree that a reevaluation is unnecessary.

In the space provided, insert a detailed description of the Reevaluation process. Include details as to why a reevaluation would or would not be completed.



Additional Requirements for Evaluations and Reevaluations

[34 CFR 300.305](#)

The reevaluation determines whether the student continues to have a disability and needs special education; whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the student to meet the measurable annual goals and to participate, as appropriate, in the general education curriculum; or the parent has requested a reevaluation.

Determination of Eligibility

[34 CFR 300.306](#)

[ARM 10.16.3007](#)

[ARM 10.16.3010-22](#)

To be eligible under IDEA, the student must meet the criteria for a disability in one or more disability category(ies) as defined in the Administrative Rules of Montana [10.16.3010-22](#) and demonstrate a need for special education and related services.

Additional procedures for identifying children with specific learning disabilities include the following:

- Specific learning disabilities [34 CFR 300.307](#)
- Additional group members [34 CFR 300.308](#)
- Determining the existence of a specific learning disability [34 CFR 300.309](#)
- Observation [34 CFR 300.310](#)
- Specific documentation for the eligibility determination [34 CFR 300.311](#)

In the space provided, insert a detailed description of local implementation. A link to each of the regulations has been provided for your access and review.

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Individualized Education Programs and Development of IEP

[CFR 300.320-328](#)

[ARM 10.16.3340](#)

[ARM 37.98.1225](#)

Definition of individualized education program:

As used in this part, the term individualized education program or IEP means a written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in a meeting in accordance with [34 CFR 300.320-300.324](#) and ARM [10.16.3340](#) and [37.98.1225](#) and [37.98.1225](#)

In the space provided, input a detailed description of local implementation. Include the following areas:

- IEP team [34 CFR 300.321](#)
- Parent participation [34 CFR 300.322](#)
- When IEPs must be in effect [34 CFR 300.323](#)
- Development, review and revision of IEP [34 CFR 300.324](#)
- Private school placement by public agencies [34 CFR 300.325](#)
- Education placements [34 CFR 300.327](#)
- Alternative means of meeting participation [34 CFR 300.328](#)

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SECTION V: Procedural Safeguards, Due Process, Procedures for Parents and Children

Procedural Safeguards

The district/cooperative and all member schools/districts will ensure that all children with disabilities and their parents are afforded procedural safeguards required by 34 CFR 300.500 through 300.536, and consistent with Montana Administrative Rule [10.16.3501](#)

Authorizing statute(s): [20-7-402](#)

MCA Implementing statute(s): [20-7-403](#)

34 CFR 300.121

[34 CFR 300.500-536](#)

A copy of the procedural safeguards must be made available to the parents of a child with a disability and must be given to the parents:

- At least one time per year.
- Upon initial referral or parental request for evaluation.
- Upon request by a parent.
- Upon the first occurrence of the filing of a complaint with the OPI.
- Upon disciplining a student and the decision is made to change the student's placement because of the student's violation of school code.

Due Process

Included in the Procedural Safeguards are the following:

- Opportunity to examine records; parent participation in meetings; [300.501\(a\)\(b\)\(c\)](#)
- Independent educational evaluations; [34 CFR 300.502](#)
- Prior written notice; content of notice; [34 CFR 300.503](#)
- Procedural safeguards notice; [34 CFR 300.504](#)
- Use of electronic mail; [34 CFR 300.505](#)
- Availability of mediation; [34 CFR 300.506](#)
- Filing of due process complaints; [34 CFR 300.507](#); [300.508](#); [300.509](#)
- Resolution process; [34 CFR 300.510](#)
- Impartial due process hearing; [34 CFR 300.511](#)
- Hearing rights; [34 CFR 300.512](#)
- Hearing decisions; [34 CFR 300.513](#); [300.514](#); [300.515](#); [300.516](#); [300.517](#)
- Status of child during due process proceedings; [34 CFR 300.518](#);
- Surrogate parents; children who are wards of the state; homeless youth; [34 CFR 300.519](#)
- Transfer of rights at age of majority; [34 CFR 300.520](#)
- Discipline procedures and manifestation determination; [34 CFR 300.530](#)
- Determination of setting; [34 CFR 300.531](#)
- Right of appeal of the determination of setting; [34 CFR 300.532](#)
- Placement during appeals; [34 CFR 300.533](#)



- Protections for children not determined eligible for special education and related services; [34 CFR 300.534](#)
- Referral to action by law enforcement and judicial authorities; [34 CFR 300.535](#)

Change of placement due to disciplinary removals; [34 CFR 300.536](#). Additional information on Dispute Resolution can be found here: [Dispute Resolution](#)

In the space provided, insert a detailed description of local implementation. A link to each regulation has been provided for your access and review.

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Assurances

The school has developed, adopted, and implemented policies and procedures that are consistent with all requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the State of Montana policies and procedures including, but not limited to, the following:

- _____ has state-approved policies and procedures.
- Special education and related service staff are in place and appropriately certified/credentialed.
- Special education files are kept confidential, locked, up-to-date, accessible, and organized with appropriate information stored for the required length of time.
- The school maintains an up-to-date, confidential, and accurate database of students with IEPs.
- All IEPs are compliant.
- All evaluations (initial and reevaluations) have been conducted within appropriate timelines.
- Evaluations for initial eligibility are comprehensive, are conducted by a multidisciplinary team, and contain evidence of classroom-based assessments and observations.
- The RTI process does not delay the evaluation of a student with a suspected disability, and the area(s) of suspected delay/concern are identified in the evaluation plan.
- All active IEPs have documentation of progress monitoring at a minimum of twice per year or as described in the IEP.
- Students receive services in accordance with their IEPs and records of documentation of services are maintained.
- All parents are notified of their Procedural Safeguards in accordance with IDEA.
- Notices and other IDEA-required information are presented to parents in understandable language (written language understandable by the general public and in the native language of the parent or other mode of communication used by the parent).
- _____ adheres to all requirements regarding parentally placed private school children.
- The district/cooperative maintains an inventory of all equipment, materials, curriculum, etc. purchased with special education funds throughout the life of the equipment.

District Superintendent

Date

Cooperative Board Chair

Date

Special Education Director

Date

Cooperative Director

Date