

MAINE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT #33

**Special Education Philosophy**

Maine School Administrative District #33 is committed to a quality educational program to increase competencies of students with disabilities, thereby reducing their levels of dependency.

The major objective of our program for the handicapped is to help the individual child, as much as possible, to become a self-supporting, responsible, and contributing member of the community.

These principles will be presented in the academic areas in ways that will provide continuous guidance to enable the student with a disability to improve self-esteem and to develop a realization of his/her capabilities and limitations.

Our programs will attempt to meet the educational needs of all students with disabilities within the school setting by providing individualized instruction to the extent necessary for each student to reach his/her potential.

It is our belief that Special Education is simply good education to which all children have a right.

In order to accomplish this, the District will incorporate the following goals:

- To improve student competencies in academic areas, thereby reducing the levels of dependency and improving self-confidence;
- To prepare the student to accept local, state, national, and worldwide responsibilities;
- To prepare the student in developing the necessary skills to select, obtain, and maintain his/her occupation of choice;
- To help the student develop a sense of responsibility and personal pride in becoming an independent member of society;
- To help the student improve self-esteem and to develop a realization of capabilities and limitations; and
- To facilitate the student's adjustment as a member of the school community.

**Personnel Development**

Maine School Administrative District #33 recognizes the importance of continual professional development of personnel involved in the education of children with disabilities, and therefore, supports and utilizes many of the programs offered through the Maine Comprehensive System of

Personnel Development. The District has developed and utilizes a comprehensive local Staff Development Plan that encourages and supports a wide variety of professional growth activities for all staff. Also, a district-level staff development committee meets on a regular basis to plan staff development activities.

### **Special Education Referral**

Maine School Administrative District #33 accepts referrals to the Pupil Evaluation Team from school staff, parents, and appropriate outside agencies. Referral forms may be obtained from the building principal. Referrals will be acted upon in a timely manner. Within 15 school days of the receipt of the referral, a Pupil Evaluation Team shall convene to review existing evaluation data and determine the need for additional evaluations. Additional evaluations may occur only after receipt of consent from a parent/guardian.

The District uses a pre-referral parent/teacher conference system. District personnel are encouraged to meet with the parents/guardians of any student experiencing failure in his/her educational program.

A parent/guardian may initiate a referral to the Pupil Evaluation Team without going through a pre-referral process if there is reason to believe that the student may require special education and supportive services.

Appropriate outside agencies may initiate a referral to the Pupil Evaluation Team if there is reason to believe that the student may require special education and supportive services. The referral can be made by contacting the building principal.

“At risk” students shall be identified and referred to the Pupil Evaluation Team. Such students may include individuals who have accumulated 45 absences during the school year, have been suspended or removed in excess of 10 days during the school year, have experienced an illness or accident likely to cause neurological or emotional impairment, etc.

### **Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information**

Maine School Administrative District #33 has adopted Maine Special Education Regulations Chapter 101 12.2 and 15.3-15.10 for the policies and procedures it will use in complying with 300.560-300.574 Confidentiality of Information.

### **Access Rights**

Maine School Administrative District #33 shall permit parents, adult students, or their authorized representative to inspect and review any education records relating to their child which are collected, maintained, or used by the school under these regulations. The school shall comply with a request for access without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an

Individualized Education Program or any due process hearing relating to the identification, evaluation, or placement of the student, and, in no case, more than 45 days after the request has been made.

The right to inspect and review education records under this section includes:

- The right to a timely response from the school to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records;
- The right to copies of the records containing the information if failure to provide those copies would effectively prevent the parent from exercising the right to inspect and review the records; and
- The right to a list of the types and locations of educational records collected, maintained, or used by the school.

### **Consent**

Consent of the parent shall be obtained in writing before personally identifiable information is disclosed to anyone other than designated officials or employees of the school.

### **Child Identification Procedures**

Maine School Administrative District #33 has the responsibility of identifying all children within its jurisdiction who may be students with disabilities. This shall be accomplished through a unit-wide screening process, which, while not a definitive or final judgement of a student's capabilities or exceptionality, 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. The Superintendent or designee will develop procedures to ensure that:

- There is maintenance of a practical method of documenting which children are receiving needed special education services and which are not;
- All children with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 20 are located, evaluated, and identified;
- Identification procedures for children between the ages 5-20 are in place, and that appropriate special education programs and related services are provided to those identified children;
- The public is made aware of the District's responsibility:
  1. To locate, evaluate, and identify all children with disabilities;

2. What services are available in the District's special education program;
  3. Who the contact person for the District is; and
- The following activities are documented:
    1. Identification and location of out-of-school children not being served;
    2. Involvement of local and regional agencies; and
    3. Screening and referral procedures are in compliance with the Maine Special Education Regulations.

### **Individualized Education Program**

Maine School Administrative District #33 has adopted Maine Special Education Regulations Chapter 101 10.1-10.10 for the procedures it will use in complying with 300.340-300.350 Individualized Education Programs.

### **Parent Involvement**

Maine School Administrative District #33 recognizes the purpose of the law and the regulations to protect the due process rights of parents with children with disabilities. The District complies with all Due Process Requirements specified in the Maine Special Education Regulations. Parental involvement is actively encouraged in all aspects of educational programming in the District.

### **Participation in Regular Education Programs**

Maine School Administrative District #33 has adopted Maine Special Education Regulations Chapter 101 11.1-11.18 for the procedures it will use in complying with 300.550-300.556 Least Restrictive Environment.

Information concerning the types of alternative placements that are available for children within each disability category and who are serviced in each type of placement are provided annually to the Maine Department of Education, Division of Special Education on the *EF-S-05 Report of Services to Exceptional Students* and *EF-S-07 Request for Subsidy Allocation of Tuition and Board for Students with Disabilities*.

History:	Adopted	Meeting #636	May 03, 1993
	Revised	Meeting #653	April 04, 1994
	Revised	Meeting #780	April 07, 2003