

Destiny School

Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual

This manual describes Destiny School's special education policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Arizona Revised Statutes (Title 15), and Arizona Administrative Code (A.A.C. R7-2-401 et seq.). Unless otherwise specified, the Special Education Director is responsible for ensuring procedures are followed, timelines are met, documentation is maintained, and compliance is monitored.

Section 1 — Child Find

Policy

Destiny School implements Child Find activities to identify, locate, and refer children suspected of having disabilities, including students who are homeless, highly mobile, migrant, parentally placed in private schools, and home schooled.

Destiny School is a charter school that does not operate a preschool program; therefore, for children under kindergarten eligibility, Destiny School refers families to the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) and/or the child's school district of residence ("home district") as appropriate.

Screening for enrolled students follows Arizona requirements, including completion within 45 calendar days of enrollment or parent notification of concern and parent notification within 10 school days when concerns are identified.

Procedures

Section 1 — Child Find

1. The Special Education Director shall oversee annual public awareness dissemination through the school website, online enrollment system, and community outreach. (posters posted at various community locations) to ensure Child Find obligations are met.
2. The Enrollment Staff shall notify the Special Education Director of all new enrollments within two school days to initiate screening tracking.
3. The Special Education Director shall disseminate screening forms that address hearing, vision, cognitive/academic skills, communication, motor skills, and adaptive development. to general education teachers to complete screenings within 45 calendar days of enrollment or parent concern. This screening will be completed for all students entering Kindergarten and any other student who is new to Destiny School.
4. Teachers shall document academic or behavioral concerns and submit referrals to the Special Education Director using the approved child study team (CST) referral form.
5. Once CST forms are completed and turned into the Special Education Director, the Special Education Director will document the completion of the concerns and give the forms to the CST grade level coordinator. The CST grade level coordinator will meet with the general education teacher(s) to write an intervention plan to address student concerns. The CST team consisting of general education teachers will meet every 3 weeks to monitor student progress and update interventions as needed. If the CST team determines the need for possible special education evaluation due to a lack of response to interventions or additional concerns, the CST team will notify the Special Education Director so procedures for Parental Consent and Initial Evaluation can be implemented. Parents should be informed of the student academic and/or behavioral concerns so they have the opportunity to participate in and be informed of their child's need for intervention.

6. The Special Education Director shall maintain a referral tracking log documenting referral date, screening completion, parent notification within 10 school days, and follow-up actions.

7. The Special Education Director shall conduct biweekly compliance reviews to ensure timelines are met and documentation is up to date.

Additional Child Find Procedures (Birth–5 Charter Referral Requirements)

Additional Child Find Procedures — Birth through Age 5 (Charter School Without Preschool Program)

Destiny School is a charter school that does not operate a preschool program. Child Find referrals for children under kindergarten eligibility shall be made to the child's school district of residence or to the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP), as appropriate. The Special Education Director is responsible for ensuring referrals and follow-up are completed and documented.

A. Children Birth through 2 Years 10½ Months (AzEIP Referral)

1. If a developmental concern is received, the staff member receiving the concern shall notify the Special Education Director within one school day.
2. The Special Education Director shall provide AzEIP information to the parent within three school days and help with referral.
3. With parent consent, the Special Education Director shall document the referral to AzEIP and record the referral date in the Child Find Referral Log.
4. The Special Education Director shall conduct follow-up within 15 calendar days to confirm the family has been contacted and document the communication.

B. Children Ages 2 Years 10½ Months through Kindergarten Eligibility (Home District Referral)

1. When Destiny School Staff receives a concern for a child not yet kindergarten eligible, the Special Education Director shall notify the parent in writing that preschool services are not provided by the charter school.
2. The Special Education Director shall provide contact information for the child's district of residence and help make the referral.
3. With parent consent, the Special Education Director shall submit a documented referral to the home school district and record the referral date in the Child Find Tracking Log.
4. The Special Education Director shall conduct follow-up within 15 calendar days to confirm referral receipt and document outcomes.

C. Documentation and Monitoring

1. The Special Education Director shall maintain documentation including referral forms, parent communications, referral confirmations, and follow-up notes in a Child Find compliance file.
2. The Special Education Director shall conduct biweekly compliance reviews of Child Find referrals to ensure timelines and follow-up requirements are met.

Section 2 — Parental Consent

Policy

Destiny School obtains informed parental consent before conducting an initial evaluation or reevaluation, consistent with IDEA requirements.

Parental consent for initial evaluation is not consent for initial provision of special education and related services.

Destiny School documents reasonable efforts to obtain consent and does not use refusal of one service/activity to deny other services except as permitted by IDEA.

Procedures

1. Prior to conducting an initial evaluation, the Special Education Director will coordinate a review of existing data with the parent(s), provide Prior Written Notice, and make reasonable attempts to obtain the parent's informed consent for evaluation. Consent for initial evaluation is not consent for initial placement and services in special education and related services.

Responsible: Special Education Director schedules/leads; MET members participate

2. For initial evaluations only, if the child is a ward of the state or is not residing with the child's parent, the Special Education Director will document the basis for not requiring parental consent when permitted, including: (a) the parent's whereabouts cannot be discovered despite reasonable efforts; (b) parental rights have been terminated by a court; or (c) educational decision-making rights have been assigned by a judge and consent is provided by the judge-appointed representative.

Responsible: Special Education Director

3. If a parent of a child who is enrolled or seeking to enroll refuses consent for an initial evaluation, the Special Education Director may, but is not required to, consult with legal counsel and seek consent through due process procedures.

Responsible: Special Education Director

4. Before providing special education and related services, the Special Education Director will make reasonable efforts to obtain informed consent for the initial provision of services.

Responsible: Special Education Director

5. If a parent refuses consent for the initial provision of special education and related services, Destiny School's Special Education Department and Administrators will not pursue consent through due process procedures. In that case, Destiny School will not be considered in violation of

FAPE requirements, and the Special Education Director is not required to convene an IEP Team meeting or develop an IEP for the child.

Responsible: Special Education Director, School Principal/Assistant Principal

6. For reevaluations, the Special Education Director will make reasonable efforts to obtain informed parental consent prior to conducting any reevaluation. If the parent refuses consent, the Special Education Director may utilize due process hearing procedures to seek consent or may decline to pursue the reevaluation.

Responsible: Special Education Director

7. Informed parental consent for reevaluation is not required if the Special Education Director has documented reasonable attempts to obtain consent and the parent fails to respond.

Responsible: Special Education Director

8. Parental consent is not required before: (a) reviewing existing data as part of an evaluation or reevaluation; or (b) administering a test or evaluation administered to all children unless consent is required of parents of all children prior to administration.

Responsible: Special Education Director

9. The Special Education Director will ensure a parent's refusal to consent to one service or activity is not used to deny the parent or child any other service, benefit, or activity, except as permitted under IDEA.

Responsible: Special Education Director

10. If a parent of a child who is home schooled or parentally placed in a private school does not provide consent for an initial evaluation or reevaluation, or fails to respond, Destiny School's Special Education Department and School Administrators will not utilize due process hearing procedures to seek consent; the Special Education Director will document the attempts and close the referral as appropriate.

Responsible: Special Education Director, School Principal/Assistant Principal

Section 3 — Evaluation and Eligibility

Policy

Destiny School conducts comprehensive, nondiscriminatory evaluations using a variety of tools and strategies, administered by trained personnel, to determine eligibility and educational needs.

Initial evaluations are completed within 60 calendar days of receiving informed written parental consent unless an allowable exception applies or a written extension (up to 30 days) is agreed upon in the child's best interest.

Eligibility determinations are made by a group of qualified professionals which includes a special education teacher, general education teacher, a school administrator, an evaluation interpreter and the parent. The parents receive evaluation reports and eligibility determinations at no cost. Eligibility determinations can also include the Speech/Language Pathologist, Hearing Impairment Specialist, Occupational Therapist and or Physical Therapist, if applicable.

Procedures

1. Upon receipt of a parent written request for evaluation, respond within 15 school days by beginning evaluation procedures (starting with a review of existing data) or providing Prior Written Notice refusing the request.

Responsible: Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Date-stamped request; Review of Existing Data notice; or PWN refusal within 15 school days.

2. If the request for special education evaluation comes from the CST Team, the Special Education Director will contact the parent within 10 days, provide a Prior Written Notice to the parent notifying them of the child being identified with academic and/or behavioral concerns and schedule a Review of Existing Data to discuss and obtain permission for initial evaluation when determined appropriate by the team, including the parent.

Responsible: Special Education Director

3. Once permission for evaluation has been obtained, the Special Education Director will assign qualified evaluators and establish an evaluation timeline calendar that ends no later than 60 calendar days from consent (or the approved extended timeline). The Special Education Director will also provide a Prior Written Notice notifying the parent of the initial evaluation reasons and areas being evaluated.

Responsible: Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Evaluator assignments; timeline tracker; consent date and due date documented.

4. Conduct evaluation using a variety of assessment tools; do not use a single measure as sole criterion; administer in native language/mode when feasible; follow publisher instructions; ensure nondiscrimination.

Responsible: School Psychologist/Qualified Evaluators; overseen by Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Assessment plan; evaluator reports; language/interpretation documentation.

5. Assess the student in all areas related to suspected disability as appropriate.

Responsible: Assigned Evaluators; overseen by Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Evaluation report sections addressing relevant domains.

6. Coordinate evaluation completion for transfer students; promptly obtain records and complete evaluation without delay when applicable.

Responsible: Special Education Director; Administrative Records Staff assist

Documentation/Evidence: Records requests; receipt dates; completion documentation.

7. Convene MET/eligibility meeting with parent participation to determine eligibility and educational needs; ensure exclusionary factors are considered.

Responsible: Special Education Director schedules/leads; MET members participate

Documentation/Evidence: Meeting notice; attendance; eligibility report; exclusionary factor documentation.

8. Provide parents a copy of the evaluation report and eligibility determination at no cost.

Responsible: Special Education Director/Administrative Support Staff

Documentation/Evidence: Parent delivery record; copy in student file.

9.. If eligible, schedule IEP meeting within 30 calendar days of eligibility determination.

Responsible: Special Education Director or Designee

Documentation/Evidence: IEP meeting notice dated within 30-day window.

Reevaluations — 34 C.F.R. §300.303

Responsible Lead: Special Education Director (tracking and scheduling) and IEP Team (review and decisions)

1. Destiny School's Special Education Department will conduct a reevaluation when: (a) The MET team members determine the educational or related service needs warrant a reevaluation; or (b) the child's parent or teacher requests a reevaluation.
2. Destiny School will not conduct a reevaluation more than once per year unless the parent and the MET team agree otherwise.
3. Destiny School will conduct a reevaluation at least once every three years unless the parent and Destiny School agree that a reevaluation is unnecessary; the Special Education Director will ensure any agreement to waive is documented.

Section 4 — Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

Policy

Destiny School uses allowable methods to identify Specific Learning Disabilities and ensures required team membership, observations, and documentation are completed. SLD determinations are not primarily the result of exclusionary factors such as a visual, hearing or motor disability, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, cultural factors, environmental or economic disadvantage or limited English proficiency and/or a lack of achievement due to a lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math.

The SLD team will consist of the parent, general education teacher, special education teacher, evaluation interpreter, PEA representative and related service providers, if applicable.

A child may have a learning disability if they are not achieving adequately for their age and/or are not meeting grade level standards approved by the state of Arizona. Areas in which a child may be evaluated to determine if a learning disability is present may include: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading fluency skills, reading comprehension, math calculation and math problem solving.

Procedures

1. Select and document the SLD method used for the student (RTI/research-based intervention, severe discrepancy, or individual determination using either).

Responsible: Special Education Director coordinates; MET/SLD team determines

Documentation/Evidence: SLD method documented in eligibility report.

2. Ensure required SLD team is present and document attendance.

Responsible: Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Meeting notice and attendance list showing required members.

3. Complete observation in the learning environment (or age-appropriate environment for out-of-school) documenting academic performance and behavior in areas of difficulty.

Responsible: Designated SLD team member

Documentation/Evidence: Observation report and date.

4. Complete SLD documentation including basis for determination, relevant observations, medical findings (if any), and exclusionary factors review.

Responsible: SLD team; compiled by Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: SLD eligibility documentation meeting required content.

5. If using RTI, maintain intervention and progress monitoring documentation and provide required parent notices.

Responsible: General Education Teacher/Interventionist collects data; Special Education Director ensures documentation

Documentation/Evidence: Intervention logs; progress monitoring data; parent notices.

6. Obtain written approval from each team member; any non-approving members submit written statements if applicable.

Responsible: Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Signed certifications; dissent statements if any.

Section 5 — Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Policy

An IEP is developed and implemented for each eligible student enrolled at Destiny School and for eligible students placed by Destiny School in a private school/facility.

Parents are provided meaningful opportunities to participate, and the IEP includes all required content and progress reporting.

Procedures

1. Schedule and conduct the initial IEP meeting within 30 calendar days of eligibility determination.

Responsible: Special Education Director or Designee

Documentation/Evidence: IEP meeting notice; date within 30 days of eligibility.

2. Ensure required IEP Team membership and document excusals when permitted with written agreement and required written input.

Responsible: Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Attendance page; excusal forms; written input.

3. Provide meeting notice early enough to ensure parent participation; offer alternative participation methods; if proceeding without parent, document attempts.

Responsible: Administrative Support Staff send notices; Special Education Director ensures documentation

Documentation/Evidence: Notices; call logs; emails; visit notes when applicable.

4. Provide interpreter/translation supports when needed and maintain written evidence that the parent understood the proceedings.

Responsible: Special Education Director coordinates; Interpreter/Translator provides support

Documentation/Evidence: Interpreter log; translated documents; parent acknowledgment.

5. Develop IEP contents (present levels, goals, progress measurement/reporting, services/supports, LRE, assessments, service schedule).

Responsible: IEP Team; Special Education Teacher drafts; Special Education Director ensures completeness

Documentation/Evidence: Completed IEP; goal and service pages; progress reporting plan.

6. Ensure IEP is accessible to all implementers; inform each teacher/provider of their responsibilities and required accommodations/modifications/supports.

Responsible: Special Education Director; Special Education Teacher supports dissemination

Documentation/Evidence: IEP access roster; staff acknowledgment; implementation checklist.

7. Implement services as soon as possible after IEP development and monitor service delivery routinely.

Responsible: Service Providers; Special Education Director monitors

Documentation/Evidence: Service logs; schedules; provider notes; monitoring checklist.

8. Complete annual IEP reviews at least every 12 months and update as needed based on progress, reevaluation results, parent input, and anticipated needs.

Responsible: Special Education Director tracks; IEP Team reviews

Documentation/Evidence: Annual review tracker; meeting notes; updated IEP.

9. For transfer students, provide comparable services immediately while adopting prior IEP or developing a new IEP; promptly request and obtain records.

Responsible: Special Education Director; Administrative Records Staff assist

Documentation/Evidence: Comparable services plan; records requests; adoption/new IEP documentation.

10. Ensure that assistive technology devices and/or services are available and implemented for students who require it as part of their special education services, related services and/or supplementary aides and services.

Responsible: Special Education Director and/or appropriate related service provider tracks and trains on student needs; IEP Team reviews, General Education teacher implements in their classroom

11. Make Extended School Year services available as needed. ESY decisions are made by the IEP team, at no cost to parents.

Responsible: Special Education Director tracks; IEP Team reviews

12. The Director of Special Education will ensure each child's IEP is accessible to each general education teacher, related service provider and other needed service providers.

Responsible: Special Education Director

13. Each teacher and related service provider will be informed of their responsibilities in implementing the IEP, including the accommodations and modifications in each student's IEP.

Responsible: Special Education Director distributes, General Education teachers, related service providers and special education teachers implement.

Section 6 — Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Policy

Students with disabilities are educated with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. Removal from general education occurs only when education in regular classes with supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

A continuum of alternative placements is available to meet student needs.

Procedures

1. Determine placement annually based on the IEP with parent participation; document consideration of continuum and supplementary aids/services.

Responsible: IEP Team; Special Education Director ensures documentation

Documentation/Evidence: Placement page; meeting notes; LRE rationale.

2. Ensure placement is as close as possible to the child's home and in the school the child would attend if not disabled unless the IEP requires otherwise.

Responsible: Special Education Director/IEP Team

Documentation/Evidence: Placement rationale; school assignment documentation.

3. Consider potential harmful effects on the child or the quality of services when selecting LRE and document the discussion.

Responsible: IEP Team

Documentation/Evidence: Meeting notes reflecting consideration.

4. Ensure access to nonacademic/extracurricular activities and provide supplementary aids and services needed for participation.

Responsible: Principal coordinates access; IEP Team determines supports; Special Education Director monitors

Documentation/Evidence: Participation plan; support documentation; communication logs.

Section 7 — Procedural Safeguards

Policy

Destiny School establishes and implements procedural safeguards, including access to records, notices, independent educational evaluations, and parent participation protections.

Procedures

1. Provide parents an opportunity to inspect and review education records and document requests for records and dates of fulfillment of requests.

Responsible: Administrative Records Staff; overseen by Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Records request log; access log entries; fulfillment documentation.

2. Provide Prior Written Notice a reasonable time before proposing/refusing actions; ensure required content and understandable language/translation, if needed.

Responsible: Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Copy of PWN; translation evidence; delivery record.

3. Provide Procedural Safeguards Notice at least annually and upon required triggering events such as initial evaluation, re-evaluation, disciplinary actions that require a change in placement and/or upon parent request; document distribution in the file.

Responsible: Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Safeguards distribution record; copy in file.

4. Respond to Independent Educational Evaluation requests without unnecessary delay by filing due process to defend the evaluation or approving an Independent Educational Evaluation at public expense.

Responsible: Special Education Director (with administration/legal counsel as applicable)

Documentation/Evidence: IEE request; decision letter; due process filing or approval documentation.

5. Document parent election to receive notices by email and maintain proof of delivery.

Responsible: Special Education Director/Administrative Support Staff

Documentation/Evidence: Email election form; sent emails; delivery/read receipts when available.

Section 8 — Discipline

Policy

Discipline for students with disabilities follows IDEA protections, including continued services after removals exceed 10 cumulative school days and manifestation determination requirements when a change of placement occurs.

Procedures

1. Track disciplinary removals for students with disabilities to identify when removals reach 10 cumulative school days.

Responsible: Principal/Assistant Principal maintains discipline records; Special Education Director monitors cumulative days

Documentation/Evidence: Discipline log; cumulative day tracker.

2. When a change of placement is proposed due to discipline, conduct a manifestation determination within 10 school days.

Responsible: Special Education Director schedules; IEP Team conducts

Documentation/Evidence: Meeting notice; manifestation determination form; attendance.

3. When removals exceed 10 cumulative days, ensure continued educational services to enable participation in general curriculum and progress toward IEP goals.

Responsible: Special Education Director coordinates; Service providers deliver

Documentation/Evidence: Service plan; logs; instructional materials.

4. When required, ensure Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plan procedures are implemented and documented.

Responsible: School Psychologist; overseen by Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: FBA report; BIP; implementation logs.

Section 9 — Confidentiality

Policy

Destiny School protects confidentiality of personally identifiable information consistent with IDEA and FERPA, limits access to authorized individuals, and maintains access logs.

Procedures

1. Maintain student special education records in secure storage with controlled access.

Responsible: Administrative Records Staff; overseen by Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Storage/security procedures; access permissions.

2. Maintain record-of-access logs documenting each request and each person who accesses student records.

Responsible: Administrative Records Staff

Documentation/Evidence: Record-of-access log entries.

3. Provide parent access to records within required timelines and document request and fulfillment date.

Responsible: Administrative Records Staff; overseen by Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Request log; fulfillment documentation.

4. Provide annual confidentiality training and maintain staff sign-in/acknowledgment documentation.

Responsible: Special Education Director

Documentation/Evidence: Training agenda; sign-in sheets; acknowledgments.