



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING


GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 16, 2021

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Dr. Scott M. Koenigsnecht, Deputy Superintendent
P-20 System and Student Transitions 

SUBJECT: New Federal Guidance Reaffirms Importance of Full Implementation of
IDEA Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic - MEMO #COVID-19-206

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) has sent a [letter to its state and local special education and early intervention partners](#) to reiterate its commitment to ensuring children with disabilities and their families have successful early intervention and educational experiences in the 2021–2022 school year.

The letter emphasizes the importance of infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families receiving equitable access to high-quality early intervention services and children with disabilities receiving special education and related services. Also, the letter provides a series of questions and answers (Q & As) as children and students return to in-person learning, including previously released guidance. The Q & A document focuses on topics to ensure that, regardless of the COVID-19 pandemic or the mode of instruction, children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and that infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families receive early intervention services.

As a part of the U.S. Department of Education's Return to School Roadmap, OSERS will release IDEA guidance documents in the coming weeks and months that focus on school reopening efforts and are intended to support the full implementation of IDEA requirements by state educational agencies, local school districts, state lead agencies, and early intervention service providers.

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[The Return to School Roadmap: Child Find Under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Act](#) is the first Q & A in the series and reaffirms the importance of appropriate implementation of IDEA's child find obligations, requirements for the identification, location, and evaluation of all children with disabilities in the states. An effective child find system is an ongoing part of each state's responsibility to ensure that FAPE is made available to all eligible children with disabilities.

If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Special Education at mde-ose@michigan.gov or call 888-320-8384.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors