

JPS Student Support Services Department

Commonly Asked Questions concerning Specialized Programs such as Special Education and Section 504 Services

- **What is Special Education?**
Special Education is a specialized service for students with unique needs. It is a service, not a place.
- **What areas of need does special education provide service?**
There are 14 areas of special education as defined by the State of Michigan and Federal IDEA laws. Each area has specific criteria that a student must meet before the student is identified as eligible to receive special education services or support.
- **Who do I contact if I believe my child needs specialized support?**
A parent/guardian may contact the student's teacher or building principal to begin a Student Study Team process. At that initial meeting, the teacher will bring into the meeting the most current data reflecting the student's strengths and areas of needs. During that meeting interventions will be suggested and a commitment to meet again after a specified time of trying the intervention.
- **What if my student does not qualify for special education services?**
The State and Federal government sets forth specific criteria concerning eligibility. Having difficulty in core curricular areas does not mean that a student qualifies as a special education student.
- **What is Section 504?**
A Section 504 Plan comes from the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is for students with a disability in the cognitive or physical areas which substantially limits one or more major life activity such as: self care, manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, learning, and working. A Section 504 Plan is written for eligible students to provide an education that is comparable to non-handicapped students. If a student is eligible for services, reasonable accommodations are made for physical and/or instructional education and related aids and services are provided.



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