

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659
REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Monday, November 10, 2025 ~ 6:00 p.m. ~ Regular Board Meeting
Northfield District Office Boardroom

[Meeting Link](#)

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Agenda Approval/Table File
3. Public Comment
4. Announcements and Recognitions
5. Items for Discussion and Reports
 - a. Summary of Public Hearing Regarding the 2024-25 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness and Achievement & Integration Results
 - b. Total Special Education System (TSES) Plan Review
 - c. Policy Committee Recommendations
6. Consent Agenda
 - a. Minutes
 - b. Gift Agreements
 - c. Personnel Items
7. Items for Individual Action
 - a. Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation Tool
8. Items for Information
 - a. Enrollment Options and History Report
 - b. Enrollment Report
 - c. Construction Update No. 18
 - d. American Education Week
9. Future Meetings
 - a. Monday, November 24, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
 - b. Monday, December 8, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
 - c. Monday, January 12, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
10. Adjournment

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MEMORANDUM

Monday, November 10, 2025 ~ 6:00 p.m. ~ Regular Board Meeting
Northfield District Office Boardroom
[Meeting Link](#)

TO: Members of the Board of Education
FROM: Matthew Hillmann, Ed.D., Superintendent
RE: Explanation of Agenda Items for the Monday, November 10, 2025, Regular School Board Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Agenda Approval/Table File
3. Public Comment
Public comment for this school board meeting may be made in person at the beginning of the meeting and must comply with the district's public comment guidelines.
4. Announcements and Recognitions
5. Items for Discussion and Reports
 - a. Summary of Public Hearing Regarding the 2024-25 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness and Achievement & Integration Results. ALC Director Daryl Kehler will summarize the 2024-25 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) and Achievement & Integration results, and any community feedback received at the public hearing that will precede the regular school board meeting.
 - b. Total Special Education System (TSES) Plan Review. Director of Special Services Sara Pratt will review the recently updated Total Special Education System (TSES) plan for the Northfield Public School District. The TSES plan outlines how Northfield Public Schools identifies, evaluates, and serves students with disabilities.
 - c. Policy Committee Recommendations. Superintendent Hillmann will present the policy committee's recommended updates to policies 502, 505, 513, 513.1, 513.2, 513.3 and 514. This will be an item for individual action at the November 24 board meeting.
6. Consent Agenda
Recommendation: Motion to approve the following items listed under the consent agenda.
 - a. Minutes. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on October 27, 2025.
 - b. Gift Agreements. Gift agreements to be approved are attached.
 - c. Personnel Items.
 - i. Appointments
 1. William Baragary, Community School Student Site Assistant at Spring Creek up to 10 hours/week effective 11/10/2025-5/14/2026. Step 3, \$17.32/hour.
 2. Joshua Bisel, .5 FTE Assistant Nordic Ski Coach at the High School beginning 11/11/2025. \$2,217.50 stipend, subject to change upon the settlement of the 2025-27 NEA Agreement.
 3. Mikaela Girard, .5 FTE Assistant Softball Coach at the High School beginning 3/9/2026. \$2,217.50 stipend, subject to change upon the settlement of the 2025-27 NEA Agreement.
 4. Ellyssa Novak, .5 FTE Assistant Softball Coach at the High School beginning 3/9/2026. \$2,217.50 stipend, subject to change upon the settlement of the 2025-27 NEA Agreement.
 5. Laurie Sadowski, Building Supervisor with Community Education/Recreation as needed beginning 11/5/2025. \$20.31/hour.
 6. Zachary Spindler-Krage, Speech Judge at the High School as needed, beginning 12/1/2025. \$100/event.
 - ii. Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment
 1. Paul Bernhard, 1.0 FTE Physical Education Teacher at Bridgewater, add .8 FTE Assistant Alpine Ski Coach effective 11/11/2025. \$3,992 stipend.
 2. Ray Coudret, 1.0 FTE RRR-Director at the High School, change to .5 FTE RRR-Director and .4 FTE RRR-Production Coordinator effective 12/1/2025.

3. Sam Dwyer, .8 FTE RRR-Production Coordinator at the High School, change to .4 FTE RRR-Production Coordinator and .6 FTE RRR-Vocal Director effective 12/1/2025.
 4. Anne Fossum, Assistant Girls Hockey Coach at the High School, add Assistant Softball Coach effective 3/9/2026. \$5,544 stipend.
 5. Bob Gregory-Bjorklund, .75 FTE RRR-Vocal Director at the High School, change to .4 FTE RRR-Vocal Director effective 12/1/2025.
 6. Shari Setchell, .2 FTE RRR-Choreographer at the High School, change to .2 FTE RRR-Choreographer, .5 FTE RRR-Director, and .2 FTE RRR-Production Coordinator effective 12/1/2025.
 7. Pete Maus, 1.0 FTE LTS Math Teacher at the ALC, change position end date from 12/19/2025 to 3/20/2026.
 8. Laurie Sadowski, Building Supervisor with Community Education/Recreation as needed, add Site Supervisor as needed, effective 11/5/2025-5/31/2026. Step 6, \$18.51/hour.
 9. Bubba Sullivan, .5 FTE Assistant Softball Coach and .5 FTE 9th Grade Softball Coach at the High School, change to 1.0 FTE Assistant Softball Coach effective 3/9/2026. \$5,544 stipend.
 10. Lisa Weis, 1.0 FTE Health Teacher at the Middle School, add Assistant Middle School Speech Coach effective 11/4/2025. \$2,772 stipend.
- iii. Leave of Absence
 1. Jessie Huebsch, Instructional Services Support Specialist at the District Office, FMLA leave of absence beginning 12/10/2025, continuing for up to 60 work days.
 2. Jordan Streiff, Administrative Support Assistant for Special Services at the District Office, FMLA leave of absence beginning 12/10/2025 through 2/4/2026.
 - iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
 1. Theresa Wilson, Assistant Alpine Ski Coach, resignation effective 10/29/2025.

*Conditional offers of employment are subject to successful completion of a criminal background check and Pre-work screening (if applicable)

7. Items for Individual Action

- a. Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation Tool. The board is requested to approve the revised mid-year superintendent evaluation tool.

Superintendent's Recommendation: Motion to approve the revised mid-year superintendent's evaluation tool as presented.

8. Items for Information

- a. Enrollment Options and History Report. Student Information Systems Specialist Christine Neset and Director of Finance Val Mertesdorf have provided the 2025-26 Enrollment Options and History Report. Director Mertesdorf will review this report with the board.
- b. Enrollment Report. Superintendent Hillmann will review the November 2025 enrollment report. This report will be included in the table file.
- c. Construction Update No. 18. Superintendent Hillmann will provide an update on the NHS construction project.
- d. American Education Week. American Education Week is November 17-21, 2025. American Education Week presents all Americans with an opportunity to celebrate public education and honor individuals who are making a difference in ensuring that every child receives a quality education. Northfield Public Schools recognizes and appreciates the team of people who work each day to prepare every student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society during this weeklong celebration of public education.

9. Future Meetings

- a. Monday, November 24, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- b. Monday, December 8, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- c. Monday, January 12, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom

10. Adjournment

Reaching Out, Reaching Up:

THE 2027 STRATEGIC PLAN



VISION

We prepare every student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society.

BENCHMARKS

1 All children are ready for kindergarten .	2 All students are connected to the community .	3 All students are at grade level in reading and mathematics by the end of third and sixth grades.
4 All students exhibit physical, social and emotional well-being .	5 All students have a connection with a caring adult beyond their parents as they transition to middle school.	6 All students have interests, goals and a vision for the future by the end of eighth grade.
7 All students graduate from high school with a plan to reach their full potential.	8 All employees report satisfaction in the workplace.	9 All parents report satisfaction with their children's educational experience.
10 The district maintains 14% of its annual expenditures in its unassigned fund balance to ensure financial stability .	11 Community education provides relevant and accessible learning opportunities for all residents.	Note: The first seven benchmarks are aligned with the language identified by Northfield Promise, a collective impact consortium of 20 community organizations committed to helping Northfield's youth thrive "from cradle to career."

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS



People

We prioritize the engagement, satisfaction, and support of every student, staff member, and family.



Learner Outcomes

We prepare every student to be academically and socially ready to choose their preferred pathway after high school graduation.



Equity

We ensure that every child has a fair opportunity to reach their full potential.



Communication

We communicate effectively and transparently with all stakeholders.



Stewardship

We responsibly manage our personnel, finances, property, time and environmental impact.



Partnerships

We seek community partnerships that accelerate student achievement of district benchmarks.

**Northfield Schools - Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Plan
Narrative Presentation to the School Board
November 10, 2025**

I will present the 2025-2026 goals for the Northfield Comprehensive and Civic Readiness Plan. All of the work is grounded in advancing the district's vision to prepare **every** student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society.

During the 2024 session, the Minnesota Legislature renamed World's Best Workforce (WBWF) to Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR). This new name emphasizes dual roles for the goals set forth in district plans—supporting students with academic achievement within their pre-K through 12 experience as well as preparing them to be active members of their community after graduation.

CACR plans will address the five following goals:

- All children are ready for school.
- All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
- All students are ready for career and college.
- All students graduate from high school.
- Prepare students to be lifelong learners.

At the October meeting, 18 Northfield Forward members proposed a number of potential metrics for each of the five CACR goals. The 2024-2025 goal results will be presented to the school board tonight at the November 10 meeting.

Our CACR metrics for the 2025-26 school year are:

All children are ready for school.

100% of kindergarten students will make a 1/2 point growth per week from the fall to spring benchmark using the Fastbridge Assessment.

All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

The attendance rate for all students will be at least 90%, and every student will improve their attendance.

All students are ready for career and college.

95% of each Northfield District grade level cohort (grades 9-12+) will be on track for graduation. For grades 9-11 we will use the 4-year graduation timeline as the goal, and for seniors we will use the 4-year graduation timeline and/or before they age out of public education.

All students graduate from high school.

The Northfield School District will achieve a 4-year graduation rate of at least 95%.

Prepare students to be lifelong learners.

In the 2025-2026 school year, 95% of Northfield High School 11th graders will know or have some idea of their interests and goals, and a vision for the future by the end of 11th grade.



Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) Annual Summary Report

Please use this template as an internal tool to gather information. Responses should be submitted electronically in the [Minnesota Education Grant System](#) (MEGS). You can copy your responses from this template into MEGS.

If your district or charter does not utilize Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) funds and complete ESEA reporting within MEGS, please submit an electronic copy of this form to CACR.MDE@state.mn.us.

District or Charter Name: Northfield Public Schools

CACR Contact Name: Daryl Kehler

CACR Contact Title: ALC Director

CACR Contact Email: 507-645-1238

CACR Contact Phone Number: dkeehler@northfieldschools.org

Annual Public Meeting

These annual public meetings are to be held in the fall of each school year.

CACR Requirement: For each school year, the school board must publish a report in the local newspaper, by mail or by electronic means on the district website.

Provide the direct website link to the district's CACR annual report. If a link is not available, describe how the district disseminates the report to families and community partners: <https://northfieldschools.org/news/worlds-best-workforce-annual-report/>

Survey(s) of Staff, Students, and Families

CACR Requirement: Each school district must periodically survey affected constituencies, in their home language(s) where appropriate and practicable, about their connection to and level of satisfaction with school.

Summarize the results of your most recent survey(s) of staff, students, and families. The Northfield Public School District sent a parent experience survey Jan 26-Feb 9, 2025 and had 457 responses. There were two main strengths of the District; "I am treated with respect at this school" and "I believe my child has the necessary

classroom supplies and equipment for effective learning”. The two main areas for growth were; “I receive positive phone calls, emails, or notes about my child from the school” and “I regularly receive feedback from school staff on how well my child is learning”. The overall mean for the District was 4.05 out of a 5 point likert scale.

Goals and Results

All Students Ready for School

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Provide the established SMART goal for the 2024-25 School Year. 72% of incoming kindergarten students will meet the grade level benchmark on the Fall 2024-25 Fastbridge Assessment.	Provide the result for the 2024-25 School Year that directly ties back to the established goal. 85% of kindergarten students met the grade level benchmark on the Fall 2024-25 Fastbridge Assessment.	Check one of the following: ☒ Goal Met (one-year goal) ☐ Goal Not Met (one-year goal) ☐ Goal Met (multi-year goal) ☐ Goal Not Met (multi-year goal) ☐ On Track (multi-year goal) ☐ Not On Track (multi-year goal) ☐ N/A (no kindergarten enrollment)

Repeat table for additional school readiness goals as appropriate.

Close the Achievement Gap(s) Between Student Groups

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Provide the established Smart goal for 2024-25 School Year. The attendance rates of FRP and Students of Color groups will meet or exceed the rate of NFRP and White peers in 24-25.	Provide the result for the 2024-25 School Year that directly ties back to the established goal. <u>Baseline:</u> Consistent attendance rates for Students of Color (74%) and FRP (70%) were below the rate of White (83%) and NFRP (85%) student demographic groups in the 2023-2024 school year. <u>Results:</u> Consistent attendance rates for Students of Color (80%) and FRP (78%) were below the rate of White (85%) and NFRP (85%) student demographic groups in the 2024-2025 school year. We did not meet this goal, but we have some wins. FRP went from 70%-78% (closed the gap from 15%-7%) SOC went from 74%-80% (closed the gap from 9%-5%)	<i>Check one of the following:</i> ☐ Goal Met (one-year goal) ☒ Goal Not Met (one-year goal) ☐ Goal Met (multi-year goal) ☐ Goal Not Met (multi-year goal) ☐ On Track (multi-year goal) ☐ Not On Track (multi-year goal)

Repeat table for additional school readiness goals as appropriate.

All Students Ready for Career and College

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Provide the established SMART goal for the 2024-25 School Year. 95% of each NHS grade level cohort (grades 9-11) will be on track for graduation.	Provide the result for the 2024-25 School Year that directly ties back to the established goal. <u>Baseline:</u> Semester 2 NHS On Track Percentages for 23-24 School Year: Grade 9: 93% Grade 10: 92% Grade 11: 92% <u>Results:</u> Semester 2 NHS On Track Percentages for 24-25 School Year: Grade 9: 95% Grade 10: 92% Grade 11: 91%	<i>Check one of the following:</i> ☐ Goal Met (one-year goal) ☐ Goal Not Met (one-year goal) ☐ Goal Met (multi-year goal) ☐ Goal Not Met (multi-year goal) ☒ On Track (multi-year goal) ☐ Not On Track (multi-year goal)

All Students Graduate

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Provide the established SMART goal for the 2024-25 School Year. The Northfield School District will achieve a 4 year graduation rate of at least 95%.	Provide the result for the 2024-25 School Year that directly ties back to the established goal. The 2024 4-year graduation rate for the Northfield Public School District was 88% and 95% for Northfield High School.	Check one of the following: ☐ Goal Met (one-year goal) ☐ Goal Not Met (one-year goal) ☐ Goal Met (multi-year goal) ☐ Goal Not Met (multi-year goal) ☒ On Track (multi-year goal) ☐ Not On Track (multi-year goal) ☐ N/A (no 12th grade enrollment)

Repeat table for additional school readiness goals as appropriate.

All Students Prepared to be Lifelong Learners

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Provide the established SMART goal for the 2024-25 School Year. In the 2024-2025 school year, 93% of Northfield Middle School 8th graders will know or have some idea of their interests, goals, and a vision for the future by the end of 8th grade.	Provide the result for the 2024-25 School Year that directly ties back to the established goal. We met this goal with 93% of 8th grade Middle School students reaching the mark.	Check one of the following: ☒ Goal Met (one-year goal) ☐ Goal Not Met (one-year goal) ☐ Goal Met (multi-year goal) ☐ Goal Not Met (multi-year goal) ☐ On Track (multi-year goal) ☐ Not On Track (multi-year goal)

Repeat table for additional school readiness goals as appropriate.

**Results of the
Comprehensive
Achievement and Civic
Readiness (CACR) Goals
2024-2025**



— Celebrating 150 years —

District Mission

Our Vision

We prepare every student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society.

Our Strategic Plan

Reaching Out, Reaching Up:
THE 2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION
We prepare every student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society.

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- People**
We prioritize the engagement, satisfaction, and support of every student, staff member, and family.
- Learner Outcomes**
We prepare every student to be academically and socially ready to choose their preferred pathway after high school graduation.
- Equity**
We ensure that every child has a fair opportunity to reach their full potential.
- Communication**
We communicate effectively and transparently with all stakeholders.
- Stewardship**
We responsibly manage our personnel, finances, property, time and environmental impact.
- Partnerships**
We seek community partnerships that accelerate student achievement of district benchmarks.

BENCHMARKS

1 All children are ready for kindergarten.	2 All students are connected to the community.	3 All students are at grade level in reading and mathematics by the end of third and sixth grades.
4 All students exhibit physical, social and emotional well-being.	5 All students have a connection with a caring adult beyond their parents as they transition to middle school.	6 All students have interests, goals and a vision for the future by the end of eighth grade.
7 All students graduate from high school with a plan to reach their full potential.	8 All employees report satisfaction in the workplace.	9 All parents report satisfaction with their children's educational experience.
10 The district maintains 14% of its annual expenditures in its unassigned fund balance to ensure financial stability.	11 Community education provides relevant and accessible learning opportunities for all residents.	Note: The first seven benchmarks are aligned with the strategic direction of Northfield Public Schools. The remaining four benchmarks are community education opportunities that align with the district's strategic direction.

District Benchmarks - All Students

1

All children are ready for **kindergarten**.

2

All students are connected to the **community**.

3

All students are at grade level in **reading and mathematics** by the end of third and sixth grades.

4

All students exhibit physical, social and emotional **well-being**.

5

All students have a **connection** with a caring adult beyond their parents as they transition to middle school.

6

All students have interests, goals and a **vision** for the future by the end of eighth grade.

7

All students **graduate** from high school with a plan to reach their full potential.

**Alignment
to CACR
Goals**



From WBWF to CACR (Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness)

2024 Legislative Change



Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Plan

What role does the school board play?

Minnesota Statutes 2023, section 120B.11, requires school boards to establish advisory committees. The advisory committee should:

- Ensure that community members have an opportunity to participate in the strategic planning process.
- Be reflective of the district's diversity and its schools, and thus include, to the extent possible, teachers, parents/guardians, support staff, students, and other community residents.
- Make recommendations to the school board concerning rigorous academic standards and student achievement goals and measures.

How will districts and charter schools measure progress?

Each district and charter school creates its own plan to prepare all students for school and align a standards-based curriculum with classroom instruction, so that students are career- and college-ready at graduation. The success of each plan can be measured locally using selected metrics.

Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Plan

CACR Goals

- **All children are ready for school.**
- **All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.**
- **All students are ready for career and college.**
- **All students graduate from high school.**
- **Prepare students to be lifelong learners.**

All children are ready for school.

CACR GOAL ONE

2024 – 2025 Readiness Goal

72% of incoming kindergarten students will meet the grade level benchmark on the Fall 2024-25 Fastbridge Assessment

Results:

85% of kindergarten students met the grade level benchmark on the Fall 2024-25 Fastbridge Assessment.

We met this Goal!

All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

CACR GOAL TWO

2024 – 2025 Achievement Gap Goal

Baseline:

Consistent attendance rates for Students of Color (74%) and FRP (70%) were below the rate of White (83%) and NFRP (85%) student demographic groups in the 2023-2024 school year.

The attendance rates of FRP and Students of Color groups will meet or exceed the rate of NFRP and White peers in 24-25.

Results:

Consistent attendance rates for Students of Color (80%) and FRP (78%) were below the rate of White (85%) and NFRP (85%) student demographic groups in the 2024-2025 school year.

We did not meet this goal, but we have some wins.

FRP went from 70%-78%
(closed the gap from 15%-7%)

SOC went from 74%-80%
(closed the gap from 9%-5%)

All students are ready for career and college.

CACR GOAL THREE

2024 – 2025 Career and College Readiness Goal

95% of each NHS
grade level cohort
(grades 9-11) will
be on track for
graduation.

Baseline:

**Semester 2 NHS On Track
Percentages for 23-24 School Year:**

Grade 9: 93%

Grade 10: 92%

Grade 11: 92%

Results:

**Semester 2 NHS On Track
Percentages for 24-25 School Year:**

Grade 9: 95%

Grade 10: 92%

Grade 11: 91%

We partially met this goal.

All students graduate from high school.

CACR GOAL FOUR

Class of 2024 Graduation Goal

The Northfield School District will achieve a 4 year graduation rate of at least 95%.

Baseline:

The 2023 4-year graduation rate for the Northfield Public School District was 93% and 97% for Northfield High School

Results:

The 2024 4-year graduation rate for the Northfield Public School District was 88% and 95% for Northfield High School

We did not meet this goal. 44 did not graduate; but 25% continued 18-21 STEP program, 30% graduated in the next year, 27% are continuing. Without counting these, the District rate would be 96%

Prepare students to be lifelong learners.

CACR GOAL FIVE

2024 – 2025 Lifelong Learner Goal

In the 2024-2025 school year, 93% of Northfield Middle School 8th graders will know or have some idea of their interests, goals, and a vision for the future by the end of 8th grade.

Baseline:

93% of 8th grade students know or have some idea of their interests, goals, and a vision for the future by the end of 8th grade.

Results:

We met this goal with 93% reaching the mark, however this goal was amended from the original goal and so this is the baseline as well.



Questions?

**Comprehensive
Achievement and Civic
Readiness (CACR) Goals
2025-2026**



— Celebrating 150 years —

District Mission

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- Partnerships**
We seek community partnerships that accelerate student achievement of district benchmarks.

BENCHMARKS

1 All children are ready for kindergarten.	2 All students are connected to the community.	3 All students are at grade level in reading and mathematics by the end of third and sixth grades.
4 All students exhibit physical, social and emotional well-being.	5 All students have a connection with a caring adult beyond their parents as they transition to middle school.	6 All students have interests, goals and a vision for the future by the end of eighth grade.
7 All students graduate from high school with a plan to reach their full potential.	8 All employees report satisfaction in the workplace.	9 All parents report satisfaction with their children's educational experience.
10 The district maintains 14% of its annual expenditures in its unassigned fund balance to ensure financial stability.	11 Community education provides relevant and accessible learning opportunities for all residents.	Note: The first seven benchmarks are aligned with the strategic direction of Northfield Public Schools. The remaining four benchmarks are community education opportunities that align with the district's strategic direction.

District Benchmarks - All Students

1

All children are ready for **kindergarten**.

2

All students are connected to the **community**.

3

All students are at grade level in **reading and mathematics** by the end of third and sixth grades.

4

All students exhibit physical, social and emotional **well-being**.

5

All students have a **connection** with a caring adult beyond their parents as they transition to middle school.

6

All students have interests, goals and a **vision** for the future by the end of eighth grade.

7

All students **graduate** from high school with a plan to reach their full potential.

**Alignment
to CACR
Goals**

Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Plan

What role does the school board play?

Minnesota Statutes 2023, section 120B.11, requires school boards to establish advisory committees. The advisory committee should:

- Ensure that community members have an opportunity to participate in the strategic planning process.
- Be reflective of the district's diversity and its schools, and thus include, to the extent possible, teachers, parents/guardians, support staff, students, and other community residents.
- Make recommendations to the school board concerning rigorous academic standards and student achievement goals and measures.

How will districts and charter schools measure progress?

Each district and charter school creates its own plan to prepare all students for school and align a standards-based curriculum with classroom instruction, so that students are career- and college-ready at graduation. The success of each plan can be measured locally using selected metrics.



**| 8 Northfield Forward
members provided input on
the 25-26 CACR goals during
the **October 2025** meeting.**

**Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Goal Setting
Parameters**

Cost neutral | No additional student assessments | Efficient measurement

Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Plan

CACR Goals

- **All children are ready for school.**
- **All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.**
- **All students are ready for career and college.**
- **All students graduate from high school.**
- **Prepare students to be lifelong learners.**

All children are ready for school.

CACR GOAL ONE

2025 – 2026 Children Ready for School Goal

100% of kindergarten students will make a 1/2 point growth per week from the Fall to Spring benchmark using the Fastbridge Assessment

Using the 80-90-100 thought process

- Using Fastbridge rate of improvement score
- Using structured phonics
- Identifying and intervening with students through a robust Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

CACR GOAL TWO

2025 – 2026 Achievement Gap Goal

The attendance rate for all students will be at least 90%, and every student will improve their attendance.

Using the 80-90-100 thought process

- Updated attendance procedures
- Improved attendance messaging to families
- Attendance teams are meeting regularly and following similar protocol.

All students are ready for career and college.

CACR GOAL THREE

2025 – 2026 Students Ready for Career and College Goal

95% of each Northfield District grade level cohort (grades 9-12+) will be on track for graduation.

Baseline:

Percentages for 24-25 School Year:

Grade 9: 95% (4 yr)

Grade 10: 92% (4 yr)

Grade 11: 91% (4 yr)

Grade 12: (4 yr OR before you age out of public education)

All students graduate from high school.

CACR GOAL FOUR

Class of 2026 Graduation Goal

The Northfield School District will achieve a 4 year graduation rate of at least 95%.

Baseline:

The 2024 4-year graduation rate for the Northfield Public School District was 88% and 95% for Northfield High School

Prepare students to be lifelong learners.

CACR GOAL FIVE

2025 – 2026 Prepare Students to be Lifelong Learners Goal

In the 2025-2026 school year, 95% of Northfield High School 11th graders will know or have some idea of their interests, goals, and a vision for the future by the end of 11th grade.

Baseline:

The thought of moving from 8th grade to 11th grade to capture the career/college readiness efforts that are happening at NHS.



Questions?

Achievement & Integration Plan

Monday November 10, 2025

District Mission

Our Vision

We prepare **every** student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society.

BENCHMARKS

1

All children are ready for **kindergarten**.

2

All students are connected to the **community**.

3

All students are at grade level in **reading and mathematics** by the end of third and sixth grades.

4

All students exhibit physical, social and emotional **well-being**.

5

All students have a **connection** with a caring adult beyond their parents as they transition to middle school.

6

All students have interests, goals and a **vision** for the future by the end of eighth grade.

7

All students **graduate** from high school with a plan to reach their full potential.

8

All **employees** report satisfaction in the workplace.

9

All **parents** report satisfaction with their children's educational experience.

Reaching Out, Reaching Up: THE 2027 STRATEGIC PLAN



VISION

We prepare every student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society.

STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS



People

We prioritize the engagement, satisfaction, and support of every student, staff member, and family.



Learner Outcomes

We prepare every student to be academically and socially ready to choose their preferred pathway after high school graduation.



Equity

We ensure that every child has a fair opportunity to reach their full potential.



Communication

We communicate effectively and transparently with all stakeholders.



Stewardship

We responsibly manage our personnel, finances, property, time and environmental impact.



Partnerships

We seek community partnerships that accelerate student achievement of district benchmarks.

BENCHMARKS

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9

All **parents** report satisfaction with their children's educational experience.

10

The district maintains 14% of its annual expenditures in its unassigned fund balance to ensure **financial stability**.

11

Community education provides relevant and accessible learning opportunities for all residents.

Note: The first seven benchmarks are aligned with the language identified by Northfield Promise, a collective impact consortium of 28 community organizations committed to helping Northfield's youth thrive "from cradle to career".

Achievement and Integration

(Annual report 24-25)

A new legislative change as of July 1, 2025, requires an annual report, funding oversight, and the timeline for district plans

- The purpose of the Achievement and Integration (A&I) for Minnesota program;
 - to pursue racial and economic integration
 - increase student achievement
 - create equitable educational opportunities
 - reduce academic disparities based on students' diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds

Achievement and Integration Goals (2022-2025)

Goal 1a: The percentage of 9th through 12th grade FRP students who are credit deficient and not on track for graduation within 4 years will decline from 27% in 2022 to 13% or less in 2025.

Results: For the 2024-25 school year, 12% of FRP students were credit deficient. Goal Met!

Achievement and Integration Goals (2022-2025)

Goal 1b: The percentage of FRP students who are proficient on the 3rd grade Reading MCA will increase from a baseline of 28% in the spring of 2021 to 40% in 2025, an increase of 3% per year from 2022 to 2025.

Results: For the 2024-25 school year, 38% of 3rd grade FRP students were proficient on the Reading MCA.

-For the 23-24 school year we had 51% proficient.

Goal Met!

Achievement and Integration Goals (2022-2025)

Goal 2: Reduce the percentage of Ds and Fs earned by FRP students at Northfield Middle School from 31% in Q2 of FY 2022 to 9%.

Results: For the 2024-25 school year, 18% of FRP students at NMS had a D or F.

-Goal not met, but we did have great progress in cutting this percentage almost in half.

Achievement and Integration Goals (2022-2025)

Goal 3: Increase student awareness and understanding of district data with student peers from the Cannon River Collaborative (CRC) so that 100% of annual data summit attendees report learning something new about the CRC districts and at least 90% of students agree that they generated potential solutions to reduce the achievement gaps between student demographic groups.

Results: For the 2024-25 school year, 100% of students reported learning something new about the districts. There was 100% of students reporting the data generated meaningful discussions to generate potential solutions. Goal Met!

Achievement and Integration Goals (2025-2028)

Goal 1: The gap in the percentage of NFRP and FRP students who are credit deficient or who are not on track for graduation will decrease from a current level of 12% at semester 1 of the 2024-2025 school year to 6% at the end of the 2027-2028 school year.

Strategies:

NHS Success Coach and NMS Educational Assistant will support identified students through the MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) and Problem Solving Teams.

ALC Counselor will support at risk students that attend the Area Learning Center.

Achievement and Integration Goals (2025-2028)

Goal 2: The percentage of Kindergarten FRP students who are at moderate or significant risk for characteristics of dyslexia will decline from a baseline of 65% in the winter of 2025 to 25% by the spring of 2028.

Strategies:

The Minnesota Reading Corps Internal Coach will support students ages 3 to grade 3 by supervising reading tutors, conducting fidelity checks, and meet with classroom teachers. The K-3 students are selected by the school MTSS team and teachers based on qualifying data.

The Family Engagement Navigators will support families and increase the connectedness of students and families to school.

The Preschool Educational Assistant will provide additional support to struggling readers.

Achievement and Integration Goals (2025-2028)

Goal 3: We will increase the percentage of high school teachers who consistently implement targeted differentiation strategies for MTSS Team Identified at-risk students from a level of less than 5% to 20% at the end of the 2027-2028 school year as measured by the Success Coach teacher touchpoint log.

Strategies:

The Northfield High School Success Coach will work with teachers to develop effective differentiation support plans for students at risk of failure.

The Success Coach will coordinate relationship focused academic tutoring for small groups or individual students.

Achievement and Integration Goals (2025-2028)

Goal 4: Increase student awareness and understanding of district data with student peers from the Cannon River Collaborative (CRC) so that 100% of annual data summit attendees report learning something new about the CRC districts and at least 90% of students agree that they generated potential solutions to reduce the achievement gaps between student demographic groups.

Strategies:

We will continue to implement a student data summit for the students of the Cannon River Collaborative (CRC) districts which include; Northfield, Faribault, Tri-City United, and W.E.M. schools. The students and adults from leadership teams facilitate the data discussion and goals for improvement.

Questions?



Northfield Public Schools

Total Special Education System (TSES)

This document serves as the Total Special Education System Plan for The Northfield Public School District in accordance with Minnesota Rule 3525.1100.

Sara Pratt, Northfield Public Schools District's Director of Special Services, is responsible for program development, coordination, and evaluation; in-service training; and general special education supervision and administration. The Special Education Director may be reached at:

Sara Pratt, Director of Special Services

201 Orchard Street South

Northfield, MN 55057

Office: 507-645-3410

Email: Spratt@northfieldschools.org

Minn. R. 3525.1100, subp. 2

Minn. R. 3525.2405



I. Child Study Procedures

The district's identification system is developed according to the requirement of nondiscrimination as Northfield Public School District does not discriminate in education on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.

A. Identification: Northfield Public School District has developed systems designed to identify pupils with disabilities beginning at birth, pupils with disabilities attending public and nonpublic schools, and pupils with disabilities who are of school age and are not attending any school. Infant and toddler intervention services under United States Code, title 20, chapter 33, and Code of Federal Regulations, title 34, part 303, are available in Northfield Public School District to children from birth through two years of age who meet the outlined criteria.

The team determines that a child from birth through the age of two years is eligible for infant and toddler intervention services if:

- A. The child meets the criteria of one of the disability categories in United States Code, title 20, chapter 33, as defined in Minnesota Rules; or
- B. The child meets one of the criteria for developmental delay in subitem (1), (2), or (3)
 - a. (1) The child has a diagnosed physical or mental condition or disorder that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay, regardless of whether the child has a demonstrated need or delay; or
 - b. The child is experiencing a developmental delay that is demonstrated by a score of 1.5 standard deviations or more below the mean, as measured by the appropriate diagnostic measures and procedures, in one or more of the following areas:
 - i. Cognitive development;
 - ii. Physical development, including vision and hearing;
 - iii. Communication development;

- iv. Social or emotional development; and
 - v. Adaptive development; or
- c. The child's eligibility is established through the application of informed clinical opinion. Informed clinical opinion may be used as an independent basis to establish a child's eligibility under this part even when other instruments do not establish eligibility; however, in no event may informed clinical opinion be used to negate the results of evaluation instruments to establish eligibility.

The team shall determine that a child from the age of three years through the age of six years is eligible for special education when:

- A. The child meets the criteria of one of the categorical disabilities in United States Code, title 20, chapter 33, sections 1400 et seq., as defined in Minnesota Rules; or
- B. The child meets one of the criteria for developmental delay in subitem (1) and the criteria in subitem (2). Northfield Public School District has elected the option of implementing these criteria for developmental delay.
 - a. The Child:
 - i. Has a diagnosed physical or mental condition or disorder that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay; or
 - ii. Has a delay in each of two or more of the areas of cognitive development, physical development, including vision and hearing; communication development; social or emotional development; and adaptive development, that is verified by an evaluation using one or more technically adequate, norm-referenced instruments. The instruments must be individually administered by appropriately trained professionals, and the scores must be at least 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in each area.
 - b. The child's need for special education is supported by:
 - i. At least one documented, systematic observation in the child's routine setting by an appropriate professional or, if observation in the daily routine setting is not possible, the alternative setting must be justified;
 - ii. A developmental history; and
 - iii. At least one other evaluation procedure in each area of identified delay that is conducted on a different day than the medical or norm-referenced evaluation, which may include criterion-referenced instruments, language samples, or curriculum-based measures.

Northfield Public School District's plan for identifying a child with a specific learning disability is consistent with Minnesota Rule 3525.1341. Northfield Public School District implements its interventions consistent with that plan. The plan details the specific scientific, research-based intervention (SRBI) approach, including timelines for progression through the model; any SRBI that is used, by content area; the parent notification and consent policies for participation in SRBI; procedures for ensuring fidelity of implementation; and a district staff training plan. Northfield Public School District's plan for identifying a child with a specific learning disability is attached as Appendix A.

B. Evaluation: Evaluation of the child and assessment of the child and family will be conducted in a manner consistent with Code of Federal Regulations, title 34, section 303.321.

A. General.

- a. The lead agency must ensure that, subject to obtaining parental consent in accordance with §303.420(a)(2), each child under the age of three who is referred for evaluation or early intervention services under this part and suspected of having a disability, receives—
 - i. A timely, comprehensive, multidisciplinary evaluation of the child in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section, unless eligibility is established under paragraph (a)(3)(i) of this section; and
 - ii. If the child is determined eligible as an infant or toddler with a disability as defined in §303.21—
 1. A multidisciplinary assessment of the unique strengths and needs of that infant or toddler and the identification of services appropriate to meet those needs;
 2. A family-directed assessment of the resources, priorities, and concerns of the family and the identification of the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of that infant or toddler. The assessments of the child and family are described in paragraph (c) of this section, and these assessments may occur simultaneously with the evaluation, provided that the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section are met.
- b. As used in this part—
 - i. Evaluation means the procedures used by qualified personnel to determine a child's initial and continuing eligibility under this part, consistent with the definition of infant or toddler with a disability in §303.21. An initial evaluation refers to the child's evaluation to determine his or her initial eligibility under this part.
 - ii. Assessment means the ongoing procedures used by qualified personnel to identify the

child's unique strengths and needs and the early intervention services appropriate to meet those needs throughout the period of the child's eligibility under this part and includes the assessment of the child, consistent with paragraph (c)(1) of this section and the assessment of the child's family, consistent with paragraph (c)(2) of this section; and

- iii. Initial assessment refers to the assessment of the child and the family assessment conducted prior to the child's first IFSP meeting.

c.

- i. A child's medical and other records may be used to establish eligibility (without conducting an evaluation of the child) under this part if those records indicate that the child's level of functioning in one or more of the developmental areas identified in §303.21(a)(1) constitutes a developmental delay or that the child otherwise meets the criteria for an infant or toddler with a disability under §303.21. If the child's part C eligibility is established under this paragraph, the lead agency or EIS provider must conduct assessments of the child and family in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.
- ii. Qualified personnel must use informed clinical opinion when conducting an evaluation and assessment of the child. In addition, the lead agency must ensure that informed clinical opinion may be used as an independent basis to establish a child's eligibility under this part even when other instruments do not establish eligibility; however, in no event may informed clinical opinion be used to negate the results of evaluation instruments used to establish eligibility under paragraph (b) of this

- d. All evaluations and assessments of the child and family must be conducted by qualified personnel, in a nondiscriminatory manner, and selected and administered so as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory.
- e. Unless clearly not feasible to do so, all evaluations and assessments of a child must be conducted in the native language of the child, in accordance with the definition of native language in §303.25.
- f. Unless clearly not feasible to do so, family assessments must be conducted in the native language of the family members being assessed, in accordance with the definition of native language in §303.25

B. Procedures for the evaluation of the child. In conducting an evaluation, no single procedure may be used as the sole criterion for determining a child's eligibility under this part. Procedures must include –

- a. Administering an evaluation instrument;
- b. Taking the child's history (including interviewing the parent);

- c. Identifying the child's level of functioning in each of the developmental areas in § 303.21(a)(1);
- d. Gathering information from other sources such as family members, other caregivers, medical providers, social workers, and educators, if necessary, to understand the full scope of the child's unique strengths and needs; and
- e. Reviewing medical, educational, or other records.

C. Procedures for assessment of the child and family.

- a. An assessment of each infant or toddler with a disability must be conducted by qualified personnel in order to identify the child's unique strengths and needs and the early intervention services appropriate to meet those needs. The assessment of the child must include the following –
 - i. A review of the results of the evaluation conducted by paragraph (b) of this section;
 - ii. Personal observations of the child; and
 - iii. The identification of the child's needs in each of the developmental areas in § 303.21(a)(1).
- b. A family-directed assessment must be conducted by qualified personnel in order to identify the family's resources, priorities, and concerns, and the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of the family's infant or toddler with a disability. The family-directed assessment must –
 - i. Be voluntary on the part of each family member participating in the assessment;
 - ii. Be based on information obtained through an assessment tool and also through an interview with those family members who elect to participate in the assessment; and
 - iii. Include the family's description of its resources, priorities, and concerns related to enhancing the child's development.
 - iv.

The team conducts an evaluation for special education purposes within a reasonable time not to exceed 30 school days from the date the district receives parental permission to conduct the evaluation or the expiration of the 14-calendar-day parental response time in cases other than initial evaluation, unless a conciliation conference or hearing is requested.

The Northfield Public School District conducts a full and individual initial evaluation before the initial provision of special education and related services to a pupil. The initial evaluation consists of procedures to determine whether a child is a pupil with a disability that adversely affects the child's educational performance as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 125A.02, who by reason thereof needs special education and related services, and to determine the educational needs of the pupil. The district proposing to conduct an initial evaluation to determine if the child qualifies as a pupil with a disability must obtain informed consent from the parent of the child before

the evaluation is conducted. Parental consent for evaluation is not construed as consent for placement for the receipt of special education and related services. The District will not override the written refusal of a parent to consent to an initial evaluation or re-evaluation.

Evaluation Procedures: Evaluations and reevaluations are conducted according to the following procedures:

- A. The Northfield Public School District shall provide notice to the parents of the pupil, according to Code of Federal Regulations, title 34, sections 300.500 to 300.505, that describes any evaluation procedures the district proposes to conduct.
- B. In conducting the evaluation, the Northfield Public School District:
 - a. Uses a variety of evaluation tools and strategies to gather relevant functional and developmental information, including information provided by the parent, that are designed to assist in determining whether the child is a pupil with a disability and the content of the pupil's individualized education program, including information related to enabling the pupil to be involved in and profess in the general curriculum, or for preschool pupils, to participate in appropriate activities;
 - b. Does not use any single procedure as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a pupil with a disability or determining an appropriate education program for the pupil; and
 - c. Uses technically sound instruments that are designed to assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors.
- C. The Northfield Public School District ensures that:
 - a. Tests and other evaluation materials used to evaluate a child under this part are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis, and are provided and administered in the pupil's native language or other mode of communication, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so;
 - b. Materials and procedures used to evaluate a child with limited English proficiency are selected and administered to ensure that they measure the extent to which the child has a disability and needs special education and related services, rather than measure the child's English language skills.
 - c. Any standardized tests that are given to the child have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used, are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel, and are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of such tests.
 - d. The child is evaluated in all areas of suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision,

hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities;

- e. Evaluation tools and strategies that provide relevant information that directly assist persons in determining the educational needs of the pupil are provided.
- f. If an evaluation is not conducted under standard conditions, a description of the extent to which it varied from standard conditions must be included in the evaluation report.
- g. Tests and other evaluation materials include those tailored to evaluate specific areas of educational need and not merely those that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.
- h. Tests are selected and administered so as best to ensure that if a test is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, unless those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure; and
- i. In evaluating each pupil with a disability, the evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the pupil's special education and related service needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the pupil has been classified.

D. Upon completion of administration of tests and other evaluation materials, the determination of whether the child is a pupil with a disability as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 125A.02, shall be made by a team of qualified professionals and the parent of the pupil in accordance with item E, and a copy of the evaluation report and the documentation of determination of eligibility will be given to the parent.

E. In making a determination of eligibility under item D, a child shall not be determined to be a pupil with a disability if the determining factor for such determination is lack of instruction in reading or math or limited English proficiency, and the child does not otherwise meet eligibility criteria under parts 3525.1325 to 3525.1351.

Additional requirements for evaluations and reevaluations:

- A. As part of an initial evaluation, if appropriate, and as part of any reevaluation under this part, or a reinstatement under part 3525.3100, the IEP team and other qualified professionals, as appropriate, shall:
 - a. Review existing evaluation data on the pupil, including evaluations and information provided by the parents of the pupil, current classroom-based assessments and observations, and teacher and related services providers' observations; and

- b. On the basis of the review, and input from the pupil's parents, identify what additional data, if any, are needed to determine whether the pupil has a particular category of disability, as described in Minnesota Statutes, section 125A.02, or, in case of a reevaluation of a pupil, whether the pupil continues to have such a disability, the present levels of performance and educational needs of the pupil, whether the pupil needs special education and related services, or in the case of a reevaluation of a pupil, whether the pupil continues to need special education and related services, and whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the pupil to meet the measurable annual goals set out in the individualized education program of the pupil and to participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum.
- B. The district administers such tests and other evaluation materials as may be needed to produce the data identified by the IEP team under item A, subitem (2).
- C. The district obtains informed parental consent, in accordance with subpart 1, prior to conducting any reevaluation of a pupil, except that such informed parental consent need not be obtained if the district can demonstrate that it had taken reasonable measures to obtain such consent and the pupil's parent has failed to respond.
- D. If the IEP team and other qualified professionals, as appropriate, determine that no additional data are needed to determine whether the pupil continues to be a pupil with a disability, the district shall notify the pupil's parents of that determination and the reasons for it, and the right of such parents to request an evaluation to determine whether the pupil continues to be a pupil with a disability, and shall not be required to conduct such an evaluation unless requested to by the pupil's parents.
- E. A district evaluates a pupil in accordance with federal regulation before determining that the pupil is no longer a pupil with a disability.

Procedures for determining eligibility and placement.

- A. In interpreting the evaluation data for the purpose of determining if a child is a pupil with a disability under parts 3525.1325 to 3525.1351 and the educational needs of the child, the school district:
 - a. draws upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior; and
 - b. ensures that the information obtained from all of the sources is documented and carefully

considered.

- B. If a determination is made that a child is a pupil with a disability who needs special education and related services, an IEP is developed for the pupil according to Minnesota Rule 3525.2810.

Evaluation report

An evaluation report is completed and delivered to the pupil's parents within the specified evaluation timeline. At a minimum, the evaluation report includes:

- A. a summary of all evaluation results;
- B. documentation of whether the pupil has a particular category of disability or, in the case of a reevaluation, whether the pupil continues to have such a disability;
- C. the pupil's present levels of performance and educational needs that derive from the disability;
- D. whether the child needs special education and related services or, in the case of a reevaluation, whether the pupil continues to need special education and related services; and
- E. whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the pupil to meet the measurable annual goals set out in the pupil's IEP and to participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum.

C. Plan for Receiving Referrals.

Northfield Public School District's plan for receiving referrals from parents, physicians, private and public programs, and health and human services agencies is attached as Appendix A.

Minn. R. 3525.1100, subp. 2(A)

Minn. R. 3525.0750

Minn. Stat. § 363A.13

Minn. R. 3525.0750

Minn. R. 3525.1350

Minn. R. 3525.1351

Minn. R. 3525.1341

Minn. R. 3525.1350 34 C.F.R. § 303.321

Minn. R. 3525.2550

Minn. R. 3525.2710

Minn. Stat. § 125A.091

Minn. R. 3525.2710, subp. 3

Minn. R. 3525.2710, subp. 4

Minn. Stat. § 125A.0942(c)

Minn. R. 3525.2710, subp. 5

Minn. R. 3525.2710, subp. 6

Minn. R. 3525.1100, subp. 2(A)



Appendix A: Identification of Students with Specific Learning Disabilities

Northfield Public Schools uses the **discrepancy model** for identification of students with specific learning disabilities, while also incorporating the Response to Intervention (RtI) process.

A child is eligible and in need of special education and related services for a specific learning disability when the child meets the criteria in **items A, B, and C**.

Pre-Evaluation Requirements: Information about each item must be sought from the parent and included as part of the evaluation data. The evaluation data must confirm that the effects of the child's disability occur in a variety of settings. The child must receive **two interventions**, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 125A.56, prior to evaluation, unless the parent requests an evaluation or the IEP team waives this requirement because it determines the child's need for an evaluation is urgent.

A. Inadequate Achievement

The child does not achieve adequately in one or more of the following areas: **oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading comprehension, reading fluency, mathematics calculation, or mathematical problem solving**, in response to appropriate classroom instruction, **AND** meets the following condition:

- **Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses:** The child exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, state-approved grade-level standards, or intellectual development, that is determined by the group to be relevant to the identification of a specific learning disability.

Required Documentation (A): Documentation to verify this finding includes evidence of low achievement from the following sources, when available: cumulative record reviews; classwork samples; anecdotal teacher records; statewide and districtwide assessments; formal, diagnostic, and

informal tests; curriculum-based evaluation results; and results from targeted support programs in general education.

B. Disorder in Psychological Processes

The child has a **disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes** which includes an information processing condition that is manifested in a variety of settings by behaviors such as inadequate:

- Acquisition of information; organization; planning and sequencing;
- Working memory (including verbal, visual, or spatial);
- Visual and auditory processing; speed of processing;
- Verbal and nonverbal expression; transfer of information; and
- Motor control for written tasks.

C. Severe Discrepancy

The child demonstrates a **severe discrepancy between general intellectual ability and achievement** in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading comprehension, reading fluency, mathematics calculation, or mathematical problem solving.

Assessment & Calculation:

- The demonstration of a severe discrepancy shall not be based **solely** on the use of standardized tests.
- For initial placement, the severe discrepancy must be **equal to or greater than 1.75 standard deviations** below the mean of the distribution of difference scores for the general population of individuals at the child's chronological age level.

D. Exclusionary Factors

The group determines that the child's inadequate achievement or lack of progress is **not primarily the result of**:

1. A visual, hearing, or motor disability;
2. Intellectual disability;
3. Emotional behavior disorder (EBD);
4. Cultural factors;
5. Environmental or economic disadvantage;

6. Limited English proficiency; or
7. Lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math.



II. Method of Providing Special Education Services for Identified Pupils

The Northfield Public District provides a full range of educational service alternatives. All students with disabilities are provided with the special instruction and services that are appropriate to their needs. The following is representative of The Northfield Public School District's method of providing special education services for the identified pupils, sites available at which service may occur, and instruction and related services are available.

Appropriate program alternatives to meet the special education needs, goals, and objectives of a pupil are determined on an individual basis. Choice of specific program alternatives is based on the pupil's current levels of performance, pupil's special education needs, goals, and objectives, and must be written in the IEP. Program alternatives are comprised of the type of services provided, the setting in which services occur, and the amount of time and frequency in which special education services occur. A pupil may receive special education services in more than one alternative based on the IEP or IFSP.

A. Method of providing the special education services for the identified pupils:

- a. Direct specialized instruction
 - i. Small group instruction in the special education setting
 - ii. Small group instruction in the general education setting
 - iii. Co-teaching in the general education setting
- b. Consultation services
 - i. Indirect consultation, modeling, and instructional support by related services providers
 - ii. Indirect consultation, modeling, and instructional support by direct services providers
- c. Indirect instruction

B. Sites available at which services may occur

- a. Northfield Area Learning Center: 201 Orchard Street South, Northfield, MN 55057
- b. Northfield High School: 1400 Division Street South, Northfield, MN 55057
- c. Northfield Middle School: 2200 Division Street South, Northfield, MN 55057

- d. Bridgeewater Elementary: 401 Jefferson Parkway, Northfield, MN 55057
- e. Spring Creek Elementary: 1400 Maple Street, Northfield, MN 55057
- f. Greenvale Park Elementary: 500 Lincoln Parkwy, Northfield, MN 55057
- g. Northfield Community Education Center: 700 Lincoln Parkway, Northfield, MN 55057
- h. Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative: 200 Western Avenue NW, Faribault, MN 55021
- i. Homebound & Home-based Services
- j. Non-public services - Child find and access to specialized instruction per IEP & IEP needs.
Services are delivered on-site in the Northfield Public School District

C. Available instruction and related services

- a. Speech/Language Services
- b. Occupational Therapy
- c. Physical Therapy
- d. School Psychological Services
- e. School Social Work Services
- f. Developmental Adaptive Physical Education Services
- g. Deaf/Hard of Hearing Services
- h. Blind/Visually Impaired Services
- i. Other Health Disabilities Consultant
- j. Autism Consultant

Minn. R. 3525.1100, subp. 2(B)

Minn. Stat. § 125A.08

Minn. R. 3525.2335



III. Administration and Management Plan

The Northfield Public School District utilizes the following administration and management plan to assure effective and efficient results of child study procedures and methods of providing special education services for the identified pupils:

- A. The following table illustrates the organization of administration and management to assure effective and efficient results of child study procedures and methods of providing special education services for the identified pupils:

Staff Name and Title	Contact Information	Description of Staff Responsibilities
Sara Pratt, Director of Special Services	(507) 645-1234 District Office 201 Orchard Street South Northfield, MN 55057	Duties involve the supervision of special education staff, program development, program evaluation, fiscal/budget administration of special needs programming, and oversight of due process and compliance requirements
Caleb Davidson, Assistant Director of Special Services	(507) 645-3441 District Office 201 Orchard Street South Northfield, MN 55057	Assists the Director in the areas listed above.
Andrea Robbins, Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator	(507) 645-3408 NCEC 700 Lincoln Parkway Northfield, MN 55057	The Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator leads the Early Childhood Special Education team and facilitates regular Child Study Review Team meetings. The ECSE Dept Lead also serves on the Special Services Leadership Team.

- B. Due Process assurances available to parents: Northfield School District has appropriate and proper due process procedures in place to assure effective and efficient results of child study procedures and method of providing special education services for the identified pupils, including alternative dispute resolution

and due process hearings. A description of these processes are as follows:

- a. Prior written notice to a) inform the parent that except for the initial placement of a child in special education, the school district will proceed with its proposal for the child's placement or for providing special education services unless the child's parent notifies the district of an objection within 14 days of when the district sends the prior written notice to the parent; and b) state that a parent who objects to a proposal or refusal in the prior written notice may request a conciliation conference or another alternative dispute resolution procedure.

B.

- a. The Northfield Public School District will not proceed with the initial evaluation of a child, the initial placement of a child in a special education program, or the initial provision of special education services for a child without the prior written consent of the child's parent. A district may not override the written refusal of a parent to consent to an initial evaluation or reevaluation.
- b. A parent, after consulting with health care, education, or other professional providers, may agree or disagree to provide the parent's child with sympathomimetic medications unless medical, dental, mental and other health services are necessary, in the professional's judgment, that the risk to the minor's life or health is of such a nature that treatment should be given without delay and the requirement of consent would result in delay or denial of treatment.
- c. Parties are encouraged to resolve disputes over the identification, evaluation, educational placement, manifestation determination, interim alternative educational placement, or the provision of a free appropriate public education to a child with a disability through conciliation, mediation, facilitated team meetings, or other alternative process. All dispute resolution options are voluntary on the part of the parent and must not be used to deny or delay the right to a due process hearing. All dispute resolution processes are provided at no cost to the parent.
- d. Conciliation Conference: a parent has the opportunity to meet with appropriate district staff in at least one conciliation conference if the parent objects to any proposal of which the parent receives prior written notice. Northfield Public School District holds a conciliation conference within ten calendar days from the date the district receives a parent's objection to a proposal or refusal in the prior written notice. All discussions held during a conciliation conference are confidential and are not admissible in a due process hearing. Within five school days after the final conciliation conference, the district must prepare and provide to the parent a conciliation conference

memorandum that describes the district's final proposed offer of service. This memorandum is admissible in evidence in any subsequent proceeding.

- e. In addition to offering at least one conciliation conference, Northfield Public School District informs parents of other dispute resolution processes, including at least mediation and facilitated team meetings. The fact that an alternative dispute resolution process was used is admissible in evidence at any subsequent proceeding. State-provided mediators and team meeting facilitators shall not be subpoenaed to testify at a due process hearing or civil action under special education law nor are any records of mediators or state-provided team meeting facilitators accessible to the parties.
- f. Descriptions of the mediation process, facilitated team meetings, state complaint, and impartial due process hearings may be found in Northfield Public School District's Procedure Safeguard Notice, attached as Appendix B.

Minn. R. 3525.1100, subp. 2(C)

Minn. R. 3525.1100, subp. 2(A) and (B)

Minn. Stat. § 125A.091



Appendix B: Northfield Public Schools District Procedure Safeguard Notice

I. Part B Notice of Procedural Safeguards Parental Rights for Public School Special Education Students

The material contained in this document is intended to provide general information and guidance regarding special education rights and procedural safeguards afforded to parents of children age 3 through 21 under state and federal law. This document explains a selection of some of the rights and procedural safeguards provided to parents under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 300, and applicable Minnesota laws and regulations; it is not a complete list or explanation of those rights. This notice is not a substitute for consulting with a licensed attorney regarding your specific legal situation. This document does not purport to include a complete rendition of applicable state and federal law, and the law may have changed since this document was issued.

Introduction

This document provides an overview of parental special education rights, sometimes called procedural safeguards. These same procedural safeguards are also available for students with disabilities who have reached the age of 18.

This Notice of Procedural Safeguards must be given to you at least one time per year. 34 C.F.R. § 300.504(a). It must also be given to you:

1. The first time your child is referred for a special education evaluation or if you request an evaluation, 34 C.F.R. § 300.504(a)(1);
2. The first time you file a complaint with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) in a school year, 34 C.F.R. § 300.504(a)(2);
3. The first time you or the district requests a due process hearing in a school year, 34 C.F.R. § 300.504(a)(2);
4. On the date the district decides to change the placement of your student by removing the student from school for a violation of the district discipline policy, 34 C.F.R. § 300.504(a)(3); or
5. Upon your request, 34 C.F.R. § 300.504(a)(4).

Prior Written Notice

The district must provide you with prior written notice each time it proposes to initiate or change, or refuses to initiate or change:

- the identification of your child;
- the evaluation and educational placement of your child;
- the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to your child; or
- when you revoke consent for services for your child in writing and before the district stops providing special education and related services, 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.503(a)(1)-(2) and 300.300(b)(4)(i).

This written notice must include:

1. A description of the action proposed or refused by the district, 34 C.F.R. § 300.503(b)(1);
2. An explanation of why the district proposes or refuses to take the action, 34 C.F.R. § 300.503 (b)(2);
3. A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the district used as a basis for its proposal or refusal, 34 C.F.R. § 300.503(b)(3);
4. A statement that you, as parents of a child with a disability, have protection under these procedural safeguards and information about how you can get a copy of the brochure describing the procedural safeguards, 34 C.F.R. § 300.503(b)(4);
5. Sources for you to contact to obtain assistance in understanding these procedural safeguards, 34 C.F.R. § 300.503(b)(5);
6. A description of other options the IEP team considered and the reasons why those options were rejected, 34 C.F.R. § 300.503(b)(6); and
7. A description of other factors relevant to the district's proposal or refusal, 34 C.F.R. § 300.503(b)(7).

In addition to federal requirements, prior written notice must inform you that, except for the initial placement of your child in special education, the school district will proceed with its proposal for your child's placement, or for providing special education services, unless you notify the district of an objection within 14 days of when the district sent you the prior written notice. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 3a(1). The district must also provide you with a copy of the proposed IEP whenever the district proposes to initiate or change the content of the IEP. Minn. R. 3525.3600.

The prior written notice must also state that, if you object to a proposal or refusal in the prior written notice, you must have an opportunity for a conciliation conference, and the school district must inform you of other alternative dispute resolution procedures, including mediation and facilitated IEP team meetings, under Minnesota Statutes, section 125A.091, subdivisions 7-9. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 3a(2).

For More Information

If you need help understanding any of your procedural rights or anything about your child's education, please contact your district's special education director. This notice must be provided in your native language or other mode of communication you may be using. If your mode of communication is not a written language, the district must take steps to translate this notice orally or by other means. The district must ensure that you understand the content of this notice and maintain written evidence that this notice was provided to you in an understandable

mode of communication and that you understood the content of this notice. 34 C.F.R. § 300.503(c).

For further information, you may contact one of the following organizations:

ARC Minnesota (advocacy for persons with developmental disabilities)

www.arcminnesota.org

952-920-0855

1-833-450-1494

Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health

www.macmh.org

651-644-7333

1-800-528-4511

Minnesota Disability Law Center

www.mndlc.org

612-334-5970 (Twin Cities Metro)

1-800-292-4150 (Greater Minnesota)

612-332-4668 (TTY)

Minnesota Department of Education

www.education.gov

651-582-8689

651-582-8201 (TTY)

PACER (Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights)

www.pacer.org

952-838-9000

1-800-53-PACER,

952-838-0190 (TTY)

SMRLS Education Law Advocacy Project (Serves families with low-income in 33 southern Minnesota counties)

www.smrls.org

1-877-696-6529

Electronic Mail

If your school district gives parents the choice to receive notices by email, you can choose to receive your prior written notice, procedural safeguards notice, or notices related to a due process complaint via email. 34 C.F.R. § 300.505.

Parental Consent

Definition of Consent

Consent means that you have been fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which your consent is sought, in your native language, or through another mode of communication. 34 C.F.R. § 300.9(a). In order to consent you must understand and agree in writing to the carrying out of the activity for which your consent is sought. This written consent must list any records that will be released and to whom. 34 C.F.R. § 300.9(b).

Revocation of Consent

Consent is voluntary and may be revoked in writing at any time. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.9(c)(1) and 300.300(b)(4). However, revocation of consent is not retroactive; meaning revocation of consent does not negate an action that has occurred after the consent was given and before the consent was revoked. 34 C.F.R. § 300.9(c)(2).

When the District Must Obtain Your Consent

A. Initial Evaluation

The district must obtain your written and informed consent before conducting its initial evaluation of your child. 34 C.F.R. § 300.300(a)(1)(i) and Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 5(a). You or a district can initiate a request for an initial evaluation. 34 C.F.R. § 300.301(b). If you do not respond to a request for consent or if you refuse to provide consent for an initial evaluation, the district cannot override your refusal to provide consent. 34 C.F.R. § 300.300(a)(3)(i) and Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 5(a). An initial evaluation shall be conducted within 30 school days from the date the district receives your permission to conduct the evaluation, unless a conciliation conference or hearing is requested. Minn. R. 3525.2550, subp. 2.

A district will not be found in violation of meeting its child find obligation or its obligations to conduct evaluations and reevaluations if you refuse to consent to or fail to respond to a request for consent for an initial evaluation. 34 C.F.R. § 300.300(a)(3)(ii).

If you consent to an initial evaluation, this consent cannot be construed as being consent for the initial provision of special education and related services. 34 C.F.R. § 300.300(a)(1)(ii).

B. Initial Placement and Provision of Special Education Services and Related Services

The district must obtain your written consent before proceeding with the initial placement of your child in a special education program and the initial provision of special education services and related services to your child determined to be a child with a disability. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 3a(1) and 5(a); 34 C.F.R. § 300.300(b)(1).

If you do not respond to a request for consent, or if you refuse to consent to the initial provision of special education and related services to your child, the district may not override your written refusal. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 5(a).

If you refuse to provide consent for the initial provision of special education and related services, or you fail to respond to a request to provide consent for the initial provision of special education and related services, the district will not be considered in violation for failure to provide your child with special education and related services for which the district requested consent. 34 C.F.R. § 300.300(b)(4)(i).

C. Reevaluations

Your consent is required before a district conducts a reevaluation of your child. 34 C.F.R. § 300.300(c). If you refuse consent to a reevaluation, the district may not override your written refusal. 34 C.F.R. § 300.300(c)(1)(ii) and Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 5(a). A reevaluation shall be conducted within 30 school days from the date the district receives your permission to conduct the evaluation or within 30 days from the expiration of the 14-calendar-day time period during which you can object to the district's proposed action. Minn. R. 3525.2550, subp. 2.

D. Transition Services

Your consent is required before personally identifiable information is released to officials of participating agencies providing or paying for transition services. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.622(a)(2) and 300.321(b)(3).

When Your Consent is not Required

Except for an initial evaluation and the initial placement and provision of special education and related services, if you do not notify the district of your objection within 14 days of when the district sends the notice of the district's proposal to you, the district's proposal goes into effect even without your consent. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 3a(1).

Additionally, your consent is not required for a district to review existing data in your child's educational file as part of an evaluation or a reevaluation. 34 C.F.R. § 300.300(d)(1)(i).

Your consent is also not required for the district to administer a test or other evaluation that is given to all children, unless consent is required from parents of all children. 34 C.F.R. § 300.300(d)(1)(ii).

Parent's Right to Object and Right to a Conciliation Conference

You have a right to object to any action the district proposes within 14 calendar days of when the district sends you the prior written notice of their proposal. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 3a(1). If you object to the district's proposal, you have the right to request a conciliation conference, mediation, facilitated IEP team meeting or a due process hearing. 34 C.F.R. § 300.507; Minn. Stat. §§ 125A.091, subd. 3a(2) and subd. 14. Within ten calendar days from the date the district receives notice of your objection to its proposal or refusal in the district's prior written notice, the district will ask you to attend a conciliation conference. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 7.

Except as provided under Minnesota Statutes, section 125A.091, all discussions held during a conciliation conference are confidential and are not admissible in a due process hearing. Within five days after the final conciliation conference, the district must prepare and provide to you a conciliation conference memorandum that describes the district's final proposed offer of service. This memorandum is admissible evidence in any subsequent proceeding. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 7.

You and the district may also agree to use mediation or a facilitated individualized education program (IEP) team meeting to resolve your disagreement. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 8. You or the district can also request a due process hearing (see section about Impartial Due Process Hearings later in this document). The district must continue to provide an appropriate education to your child during the proceedings of a due process hearing. 34 C.F.R. § 300.518.

Confidentiality and Personally Identifiable Information

Personally identifiable information is information that includes, but is not limited to, a student's name, the name

of the student's parent or other family members, the address of the student or student's family, a personal identifier, such as the student's Social Security number, student number, or biometric record, another indirect identifier, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, a mother's maiden name, other information that, alone or in combination, is linked to or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty, or information requested by a person who the educational agency or institution reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates. 34 C.F.R. § 99.3.

Districts and MDE must protect the confidentiality of any personally identifiable data, information, and records they collect, maintain, disclose and destroy. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.610 and 300.623.

Generally, your written consent is required before a district may disclose personally identifiable information from your child's educational record with anyone other than officials of participating agencies collecting or using the information under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or for any purpose other than meeting a requirement of that law. 34 C.F.R. §§ 99.3 and 99.31.

When your consent is not required to share personally identifiable information. Your consent, or the consent of an eligible student (age 18 or older), is not required before personally identifiable information contained in education records is released to officials of a school district or the state department of education for meeting IDEA requirements. 34 C.F.R. § 300.622(a).

Your child's educational records, including disciplinary records, can be transferred without your consent to officials of another school, district, or postsecondary institution if your child seeks to enroll in or attend the school or institution or a school in that district. 34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(2).

Disclosures made without your consent must be authorized under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Please refer to 34 C.F.R. Part 99 for additional information on consent requirements concerning data privacy under federal law.

Directory Information

Directory information can be shared without your consent. This type of information is data contained in an education record of your child that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. 34 C.F.R. § 99.3.

Directory information includes, but is not limited to, a student's address, telephone number, email address, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade level, enrollment status, dates of attendance, participation in official activities and sports, weight and height of athletic team members, degrees, honors, and awards received, the most recent educational agency or institution attended, and a student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used for accessing or communicating electronically if certain criteria are met. Directory information does not include a student's Social Security number or a student ID number not used in connection with accessing or communicating electronically as provided under federal law. 34 C.F.R. § 99.3.

Districts must give you the option to refuse to let the district designate any or all data about your child as directory information. This notice can be given to you by any means reasonably likely to inform you or an eligible student of this right. Minn. Stat. § 13.32, subd. 5. If you do not refuse to release the above information as directory information, that information is considered public data and can be shared without your consent.

Data about you (meaning parents) is private data but can be treated as directory information if the same

procedures that are used by a district to designate student data as directory information are followed. Minn. Stat. § 13.32, subd. 2(c).

Written Annual Notice Relating to Third-Party Billing for IEP Health-Related Services

Before billing Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare for health-related services the first time, and each year, the district must inform you in writing that:

1. The district will share data related to your child and health-related services on your child's IEP with the Minnesota Department of Human Services to determine if your child is covered by Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare and whether those services may be billed to Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare.
2. Before billing Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare for health-related services the first time, the district must obtain your consent, including specifying the personally identifiable information that may be disclosed (e.g., records or information about the services that may be provided), the purpose of the disclosure, the agency to which the disclosure may be made (i.e., the Department of Human Services) and which specifies that you understand and agree that the school district may access your (or your child's) public benefits or insurance to pay for health-related services.
3. The district will bill Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare for the health-related services on your child's IEP. Minn. Stat. § 125A.21, subd. 2(c)(1).
4. The district may not require you to sign up for or enroll in Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare or other insurance programs in order for your child to receive special education services.
5. The district may not require you to incur an out-of-pocket expense such as the payment of a deductible or co-pay amount incurred in filing a claim for health services provided, but may pay the cost that you otherwise would be required to pay.
6. The district may not use your child's benefits under Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare if that use would: decrease available lifetime coverage or any other insured benefit; result in your family paying for services that would otherwise be covered by the public benefits or insurance program and that are required for the child outside of the time your child is in school; increase your premiums or lead to the discontinuation of benefits or insurance; or risk your loss of eligibility for home and community-based waivers, based on aggregate health-related expenditures.
7. You have the right to receive a copy of education records the district shares with any third party when seeking reimbursement for IEP health-related services. Minn. Stat. § 125A.21, subd. 2(c)(2).

You have the right to stop your consent for disclosure of your child's education records to a third party, including the Department of Human Services, at any time. If you stop consent, the district may no longer share your child's education records to bill a third party for IEP health-related services. You can withdraw your consent at any time,

and your child's IEP services will not change or stop. Minn. Stat. § 125A.21, subd. 2(c)(3).

Independent Educational Evaluations

An independent educational evaluation (IEE) is an evaluation by a qualified person(s) who is not an employee of your district. 34 C.F.R. § 300.502(a)(3)(i). You may ask for an IEE at school district expense if you disagree with the district's evaluation. 34 C.F.R. § 300.502(b)(1). A hearing officer may also order an independent educational evaluation of your child at school district expense during a due process hearing. 34 C.F.R. § 300.502(d).

Upon request for an IEE, the district must give you information regarding its criteria for selection of an independent examiner and information about where an independent education evaluation may be obtained. 34 C.F.R. § 300.502(a)(2).

If you request an IEE, the district must, without delay, ensure that it is provided at public expense or request a hearing to determine the appropriateness of its evaluation. 34 C.F.R. § 300.502(b)(2). If the district goes to hearing and the hearing officer determines the district's evaluation is appropriate, you still have the right to an independent evaluation, but not at public expense. 34 C.F.R. § 300.502(b)(3).

If you obtain an IEE, the results of the evaluation must be considered by the IEP team and may be presented as evidence at a due process hearing regarding your child. 34 C.F.R. § 300.502(c).

Education Records

Definition of an Education Record

Under federal law an education record means those records that are directly related to a student and that are maintained by the department or the district.

Your Access to Records

If you want to look at your child's education records, the district must give you access to those records for your review. Education records include most of the information about your child that is held by the school. 34 C.F.R. § 300.613(a). However, information held solely by your child's teacher for his or her own instructional use may not be included in the education records. Minn. Stat. § 13.32, subd. 1(a).

The district must allow you to review the records without unnecessary delay, and before any meeting regarding an IEP, or any hearing or resolution session about your child. 34 C.F.R. § 300.613(a). In addition, the district must comply with your request to review your child's education records immediately, if possible, or within 10 days of the date of the request (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays), if immediate compliance is not possible. Minn. Stat. § 13.04, subd. 3.

Your right to inspect and review records includes the right to:

1. An explanation or interpretation from the district of your child's records upon request, 34 C.F.R. § 300.613(b)(1); Minn. Stat. § 13.04, subd. 3;
2. Have your representative inspect and review the records on your behalf, 34 C.F.R. § 300.613(b)(3);
3. Request that the district provide copies of your child's educational records to you, 34 C.F.R. §

300.613(b)(2); Minn. Stat. § 13.04, subd. 3; and

4. Review your child's records as often as you wish in accordance with state law, 34 C.F.R. § 300.613(c). State law provides that if you have been shown private data and have been informed of its meaning, that data does not need to be disclosed to you for a period of 6 months unless a dispute or action is pending or new information is created or collected. Minn. Stat. § 13.04, subd. 3.

Transfer of Rights

Your rights regarding accessing your child's education records generally transfer to your child at age 18. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.625 and 99.5(a). Notice must be provided to you and your child regarding this transfer of rights. 34 C.F.R. § 300.520(a)(3).

Records on More Than One Child

If any education record includes information on more than one child, you have the right to inspect and review only information relating to your child. 34 C.F.R. § 300.615. You can seek consent to review and inspect education records that include information about children in addition to your own, but those parents of those children have a right to refuse your request for consent.

List of Types and Locations of Information

Upon your request, the district and the department must provide you with a list of the types and locations of education records they collect, maintain or use. 34 C.F.R. § 300.616.

Record of Access by Others

The district must keep a record of each request for access to, and each disclosure of, personally identifiable information in your child's education records. This record of access must include the name of the individual who made the request or received personally identifiable information from your child's education records, the date access was given and the purpose of the disclosure or the individual's legitimate interest in the information. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.614 and 99.32.

Consent to Release Records

Generally, your consent is required before personally identifiable information is released to unauthorized individuals or agencies. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.622(a) and 99.30(a); Minn. Stat. § 13.05, subd. 4(d). The consent must be in writing and must specify the individuals or agencies authorized to receive the information; the nature of the information to be disclosed; the purpose for which the information may be used; and a reasonable expiration date for the authorization to release information. 34 C.F.R. § 99.30(b); Minn. Stat. § 13.05, subd. 4(d). Upon request, the district must provide you with a copy of records it discloses after you have given this consent. 34 C.F.R. § 99.30(c).

The district may not disclose information contained in your child's IEP, including diagnosis and treatment information, to a health plan company without your signed and dated consent. Minn. Stat. § 125A.21, subd. 7.

Fees for Searching, Retrieving and Copying Records

The district may not charge a fee to search or retrieve records. However, if you request copies, the district may charge a reasonable fee for the copies, unless charging that fee would prevent you from exercising your right to inspect and review the education records because you cannot afford to pay it. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.617 and 99.11; Minn. Stat. § 13.04, subd. 3.

Amendment of Records at Parent's Request

If you believe that information in your child's records is inaccurate, misleading, incomplete or in violation of your child's privacy or other rights, you may request in writing that the district amend or remove the information. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.618(a) and 99.20(a); Minn. Stat. § 13.04, subd. 4.

The district must decide within a reasonable time whether it will amend the records. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.618(b) and 99.20(b). If the district decides not to amend the records, it must inform you that you have the right to a hearing to challenge the district's decision. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.618(c), 300.619 and 99.20(c). If, as a result of that hearing, the district decides that the information is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of your child's privacy right, it must inform you that you have the right to include a statement of your comments and disagreements alongside the challenged information in your child's education records. 34 C.F.R. § 300.620(b). A hearing to challenge information in education records must be conducted according to the procedures for such hearings under FERPA. 34 C.F.R. § 300.621.

Transfer of Records

Minnesota Statutes require that a district, a charter school, or a nonpublic school transfer a student's educational records, including disciplinary records, from a school a student is transferring from to a school in which a student is enrolling within 10 business days of a request. Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, subd. 7.

Destruction of Records

The district must inform you when personally identifiable information is no longer needed in order to provide education services to your child. 34 C.F.R. § 300.624(a). That information must be destroyed at your request. However, the school may retain a permanent record of your child's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance records, classes attended, grade level completed and year completed. 34 C.F.R. § 300.624(b).

Under federal law, destruction means the physical removal of personal identifiers from information so that the information is no longer personally identifiable. Thus, the student's record does not need to be physically destroyed to comply with your request to destroy special education related records. Districts can appropriately comply with this requirement by removing personally identifiable information from the student's records. The choice of destruction method generally lies with the school district. 34 C.F.R. § 300.611; Letter to Purcell, 211 IDELR 462 (OSEP, 1987); and Klein Indep. Sch. Dist., 17 IDELR 359 (SEA TC, 1990).

The district shall not destroy any education records if there is an outstanding request to inspect or review the records. 34 C.F.R. § 99.10(e).

Despite your request to destroy records a district can keep certain records necessary to comply with the General Education Provision Act (GEPA), which requires that recipients of federal funds keep records related to the use of those funds. Letter to New, 211 IDELR 473 (OSEP, 1987); 34 C.F.R. §300.611(a); and 20 U.S.C. Ch. 31, sec. 1232(f)(a). You may want to maintain certain special education records about your child for documentation purposes in the future, such as for applying for SSI benefits.

Mediation

Mediation is a free, voluntary process to help resolve disputes. You or your district may request mediation at no charge from the Minnesota Department of Education's Special Education Alternative Dispute Resolution program at 651-582-8689. Mediation uses a neutral third party trained in dispute resolution techniques. Mediation may not be used to deny or delay your right to a due process hearing. Both you and district staff must agree to try mediation before a mediator can be assigned. At any time during the mediation, you or the district may end the mediation. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.506 and 300.152(a)(3)(ii).

If you and the district resolve all or a portion of the dispute or agree to use another procedure to resolve the dispute, the mediator shall ensure that the resolution or agreement is in writing and signed by both you and the district and that both parties receive a copy of the document. The written resolution or agreement shall state that all discussions that occurred during mediation are confidential and may not be used as evidence in any hearing or civil proceeding. The resolution or agreement is legally binding on both you and the district and is enforceable in state or federal district court. You or the district can request another mediation to resolve a dispute over implementing the mediation agreement, if needed. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 10.

Filing a Written Special Education State Complaint

Any organization or individual may file a complaint with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). 34 C.F.R. § 300.153(a). Complaints sent to MDE must:

1. Be in writing and be signed by the individual or organization filing the complaint, 34 C.F.R. § 300.153(a);
2. Allege violations of state or federal special education law or rule, 34 C.F.R. § 300.153(b)(1);
3. State the facts upon which the allegation is based, 34 C.F.R. § 300.153(b)(2);
4. Include the name, address and telephone number of the person or organization making the complaint, 34 C.F.R. § 300.153(b)(3);
5. Include the name and address of the residence of the child and the name of the school the child is attending, 34 C.F.R. § 300.153(b)(4)(i)(ii);
6. A description of the nature of the child's problem; including facts relating to the problem, 34 C.F.R. § 300.153(b)(4)(iv);
7. A proposed resolution of the problem to the extent known and available to the party at the time the complaint is filed, 34 C.F.R. § 300.153(b)(4)(v); and
8. Be forwarded to the public agency providing services to the child at the same time the complaint is sent to MDE, 34 C.F.R. § 300.153(d).

The complaint must be sent to:

Minnesota Department Education

Division of Assistance and Compliance

Due Process Supervisor

400 NE Stinson Blvd

Minneapolis, MN 55413

Phone: 651.582.8689/Fax: 651.582.8725

The complaint must be received by MDE no later than one year after the alleged violation occurred. 34 C.F.R. § 300.153(c). MDE will issue a written decision within 60 days, unless exceptional circumstances require a longer time or you or the district agree to extend the time to participate in mediation. 34 C.F.R. § 300.152(a) and (b). The final complaint decision may be appealed to the Minnesota Court of Appeals by you (the parent) or the school district injured-in-fact by the decision within 60 days of receiving notice of the final decision.

Impartial Due Process Hearing

Both you and the district have a right to file a due process complaint and request an impartial due process hearing in writing within two years of the date you or the agency knew or should have known about the alleged action that forms the basis of the due process complaint. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(a) and 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.507 and 300.511(e).

A due process complaint can be filed regarding a proposal or refusal to initiate or change a child's evaluation, IEP, educational placement, or to provide FAPE. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(a).

A due process complaint may address any matter related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, manifestation determination or provision of a free and appropriate public education of your child. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 12. Within 15 days of receiving notice of your due process complaint, and prior to the due process hearing, the school district must arrange for a resolution meeting with you and the relevant members of the IEP team who have knowledge of the facts alleged in the due process complaint. 34 C.F.R. § 300.510(a).

The purpose of this meeting is for you to discuss the due process complaint, and the facts that form the basis of the due process complaint, and to allow the school district an opportunity to resolve the dispute that is the basis for the due process complaint. 34 C.F.R. § 300.510(a)(2).

The resolution meeting need not be held if you and the school district agree in writing to waive the meeting or agree to mediation. 34 C.F.R. § 300.510(a)(3). A resolution meeting is also not required to be held when the district is the filing party. 34 C.F.R. 300.510(a) cmts. at 71 F.R. 46700 (2006).

If the matter is not resolved within 30 days of receipt of the due process complaint, the hearing timelines begin. 34 C.F.R. § 300.510(b)(1).

If the school district is unable to obtain your participation in the resolution meeting or mediation after reasonable efforts have been made, and the school district does not agree to waive the meeting in writing, the school district may, at the conclusion of the 30-day period, request that a hearing officer dismiss your due process complaint. 34 C.F.R. § 300.510(b)(4).

Loss of Right to a Due Process Hearing

NOTE: Due to an interpretation of state law by the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals, if your child changes school districts and you do not file a due process complaint before your child enrolls in a new district, you may lose the right to have a due process hearing about any special education issues that arose in the previous district. *See*

Thompson v. Bd. of the Special Sch. Dist. No. 1, 144 F.3d.574 (8th Cir. 1998). You do still have a right to file a due process complaint about special educational issues that may arise in the new district where your child is attending.

Procedures for Initiation of a Due Process Hearing

Upon filing a written due process complaint, the district must give you a copy of this procedural safeguard notice and a copy of your rights at hearing. 34 C.F.R. § 300.504(a)(2). If you or the district file a due process complaint, the other party must be provided with a copy of the complaint and submit the complaint to MDE. Once it receives the request, MDE must give a copy of the procedural safeguards notice to you. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(d). All written requests must include:

1. The name of your child, 34 C.F.R. § 300.508(b)(1); Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(b);
2. The address of your child, 34 C.F.R. § 300.508(b)(2); Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(b);
3. The name of the school your child is attending, 34 C.F.R. § 300.508(b)(3); Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(b);
4. A description of the problem(s), including your view of the facts, 34 C.F.R. § 300.508(b)(5); Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(b); and
5. A proposed resolution of the problem to the extent known and available to you at the time, 34 C.F.R. § 300.508(b)(6); Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(b).

MDE maintains a list of qualified hearing officers. Upon receipt of a written due process complaint, MDE will appoint a hearing officer from that list to conduct the hearing. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 13. Below are a few of your rights at hearing. This is not a complete list of rights.

Both you and the district have the right to:

1. Be accompanied and advised by counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training with respect to the problems of children with disabilities, 34 C.F.R. § 300.512(a)(1);
2. Present evidence and confront, cross-examine and compel the attendance of witnesses, 34 C.F.R. § 300.512(a)(2);
3. Prohibit the introduction of any evidence at the hearing that has not been disclosed at least five business days before the hearing, including evaluation data and recommendations based on that data, 34 C.F.R. § 300.512(a)(3); and
4. Receive a free copy of the hearing transcript or electronic recording of findings of fact and decisions, 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.512(a)(4)-(a)(5) and (c)(3).

As a parent, you, specifically, have the right to:

1. Have your child, who is the subject of the hearing, present, 34 C.F.R. § 300.512(c)(1);

2. Open the hearing to the public, 34 C.F.R. § 300.512(c)(2); and
3. Have the record or transcript of the hearing and the hearing officer's findings of fact, conclusions of law and decisions made provided to you at no cost. 34 C.F.R. § 300.512(c)(3); Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 12.

Responding to a Due Process Complaint

If you file a due process complaint and you did not previously receive a prior written notice from the district about the subject matter of the complaint, the district must send you a written explanation of why the district refused to take the action raised in the complaint within 10 days of receiving your complaint. This explanation must include a description of other options considered by the IEP team, why those options were rejected, a description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report that the district used as the basis for the proposed or refused action, and a description of the factors relevant to the district's proposal or refusal decision. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(e)(1).

The district can assert that the due process complaint does not meet the requirements under state law. A due process complaint is considered sufficient unless the party who received the request notifies the hearing officer in writing within 15 days of receiving the request that they believe the request does not meet statutory requirements. The hearing officer must determine whether the due process complaint meets statutory requirements within five days of receiving the complaint and notify the parties. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(e) (1) and (2).

Upon receiving your due process complaint, the district must also send you a written response that addresses the issues you raised in the complaint within 10 days of receiving the request. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(f).

Disclosure of Additional Evidence Before a Hearing

A prehearing conference must be held within five business days of the date the commissioner appoints a hearing officer. This conference can be held in person, at a location within the district, or by telephone. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 15. At least five business days before a hearing, you and the district must disclose to each other all evaluations of your child completed by that date and recommendations based on those evaluations that are intended to be used at the hearing. 34 C.F.R. § 300.512(b)(1). A hearing officer may refuse to allow you to introduce any undisclosed evaluations or recommendations at the hearing without consent of the other party. 34 C.F.R. § 300.512(b)(2).

The Hearing Decision

A hearing decision must be issued and provided to each party within 45 calendar days, or within an appropriately extended time period, upon the expiration of the 30-day resolution period after the due process complaint was received by the state agency. 34 C.F.R. § 300.515; Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 20(a). A hearing officer may extend the time beyond the 45-day period if requested by either party for good cause shown on the record. 34 C.F.R. § 300.515(c); Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 18, 20(a). A hearing officer must conduct oral arguments in a hearing at a time and place that is reasonably convenient to you and your child. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 20(a). A hearing officer's decision on whether your child received FAPE must be based on evidence and arguments that directly relate to FAPE. 34 C.F.R. § 300.513. The hearing decision is final unless you or the district files a civil action. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.514(a)-(b) and 300.516(a). A hearing officer lacks the authority to amend a decision except for clerical and mathematical errors. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 20(b).

Separate Due Process Complaint

You have the right to file a separate due process complaint on an issue separate from a due process complaint already filed. 34 C.F.R. § 300.513(c).

Free or Low-Cost Legal Resources

The district must inform you of any free or low-cost legal and other relevant services available in the area if you request the information or if you or the school district file a due process complaint. 34 C.F.R. § 300.507(2)(b). A legal resource list is also available on MDE's Special Education Hearings webpage (MDE > Select Students and Families > Special Education > Conflicts in Special Education > Special Education Due Process Hearings).

Complaint and Hearings Database

Final decisions on special education complaints and due process hearings are available to the public on the MDE website. 34 C.F.R. § 300.513(d). MDE maintains a public database and makes decisions available that are redacted, removing all personally identifiable information. This database is available on MDE's website > Data Center > Data Reports and Analytics > Complaints and Hearing Decisions (<https://public.education.mn.gov/MDEAnalytics/DataTopic.jsp?TOPICID=366>).

Civil Action

When you or the district disagrees with the findings or decisions made by a hearing officer, either party may file a court action. The action may be brought in federal district court or the state court of appeals. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.514(b) and 300.516(a). Different standards of review apply in each court. An appeal to the state court of appeals must be made within 60 calendar days of your receipt of the decision. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 24. An appeal to federal district court must be made within 90 days of the date of the decision. 34 C.F.R. § 300.516(b); Minn. Stat. § 125a.091, subd. 24.

Placement During a Hearing or Civil Action

During a hearing or court action, unless you and the district agree otherwise, your child will remain in the educational placement where he/she is currently placed and must not be denied initial admission to school. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.518(a) and (b) and 300.533. This is commonly referred to as the “stay-put” rule.

Two exceptions to the “stay-put” rule exist:

1. Students may be removed from their educational setting for not more than 45 school days to an interim alternative educational placement for certain weapon, drug or serious bodily injury violations, 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(g)(1)-(3); and
2. A hearing officer's decision agreeing with you that a change in placement is appropriate as the “stay-put” placement during subsequent appeals, 34 C.F.R. § 300.518(d).

Expedited Hearings

You (the parent) or the district can file a due process complaint and request an expedited hearing in the following situations:

1. Whenever you dispute the district's proposal to initiate or change the identification, evaluation or

educational placement of your child or the district's provision of FAPE to your child, Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(a); 34 C.F.R. § 300.532(a) and (c)(1); 34 C.F.R. 300.507(a) and 34 C.F.R. § 300.503(a)(1);

2. Whenever you dispute the district's refusal to initiate or change the identification, evaluation or educational placement of your child or the district's provision of FAPE to your child, Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 14(a); 34 C.F.R. § 300.532(a) and (c)(1); 34 C.F.R. § 300.507(a); 34 C.F.R. § 300.503(a)(2);

3. Whenever you dispute the manifestation determination, 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.530 and 300.532(a); and

4. Whenever the district believes that maintaining the current placement of your child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, 34 C.F.R. § 300.532(b)(2)(ii).

You or a school district may file a written due process complaint and request an expedited due process hearing as described above. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 19; 34 C.F.R. § 300.532(c)(1).

Timelines for Expedited Hearings

Expedited hearings must be held within 20 school days of the date the expedited due process complaint is filed. The hearing officer must issue a decision within 10 school days after the hearing. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, Subd. 19; 34 C.F.R. § 300.532(c)(2). A resolution meeting must occur within 7 days of receiving the expedited due process complaint unless you and the school district agree in writing to either waive the resolution meeting or use the mediation process. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 19; 34 C.F.R. § 300.532(c)(3) and (3)(i). The expedited due process hearing may proceed unless the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties within 15 days of receiving the request. Minn. Stat. § 125A.091, subd. 19; 34 C.F.R. § 300.532(c)(3)(ii).

Dismissal of Due Process Complaint

If the school district is unable to obtain your participation in the resolution meeting or mediation after reasonable efforts have been made and the school district does not agree to waive the meeting in writing, the school district may, at the conclusion of the 30-day period, request that a hearing officer dismiss your due process complaint. 34 C.F.R. § 300.510(b)(4).

Placement by a Hearing Officer

A hearing officer may decide to move your child to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days if the hearing officer determines your child is substantially likely to injure themselves or others if they remain in the current placement. 34 C.F.R. § 300.532(b)(2)(ii).

Right to Appeal Decision

You or the district can appeal the decision of a hearing officer in an expedited due process hearing. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.532(c)(5) and 300.514.

Interim Alternative Educational Placement

The district may change your child's educational placement for up to 45 school days, if your child:

1. Carries a dangerous weapon to or possesses a dangerous weapon at school, on school premises, or at a

school function under the jurisdiction of the school district or MDE as defined in federal law, 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(g)(1);

2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the school district or MDE. This does not include alcohol or tobacco, 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(g)(2); or

3. Inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the school district or MDE as defined in federal law, 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(g)(3).

On the date the district decides to remove your child and the removal is a change of placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the school district must notify you of that decision, and provide you with the procedural safeguards notice. 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(h).

The IEP team determines the interim alternative educational setting and appropriate special education services. 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.530(d)(5) and 300.531. Even though this is a temporary change, it must allow your child:

1. To continue to participate in the general education curriculum and progress towards meeting goals set out in your child's IEP, although in a different setting, 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.530(d)(1)(i) and (d)(4); and
2. Include services and modifications designed to prevent the behavior from recurring, 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(d)(1)(ii).

If your child is placed in an interim alternative educational setting, an IEP meeting must be convened within 10 school days of the decision. 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(e)(1). At this meeting, the team must discuss behavior and its relationship to your child's disability. The team must review evaluation information regarding your child's behavior, and determine the appropriateness of your child's IEP and behavior plan. The team will then determine if your child's conduct was caused by, or had a direct relationship to his or her disability, or if your child's conduct was the direct result of the school district's failure to implement the IEP. 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(e)(1).

Attorney's Fees for Hearings

You may be able to recover attorney fees if you prevail in a due process hearing. 34 C.F.R. § 300.517(a)(1)(i). A judge may make an award of attorney's fees based on prevailing rates in your community. 34 C.F.R. § 300.517(c)(1). The court may reduce an award of attorney's fees if it finds that you unreasonably delayed the settlement or decision in the case. 34 C.F.R. § 300.517(c)(4)(i). If the district prevails and a court agrees that your request for a hearing was for any improper purpose, you may be required to pay the district's attorney's fees. 34 C.F.R. § 300.517(a)(iii).

Exclusions and Expulsion of Pupils With a Disability

Before your child with a disability can be expelled or excluded from school, a manifestation determination must be held. Minn. Stat. § 121A.43(d). If your child's misbehavior is related to his or her disability, your child cannot be expelled.

When a child with a disability is excluded or expelled under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minnesota Statutes

Sections 121A.41-56, for misbehavior that is not a manifestation of the child's disability, the district shall continue to provide special education and related services after the period a period of suspension, if imposed. Minn. Stat. § 121A.43(d).

Disciplinary Removals

If a child with a disability is removed from his or her current educational placement, this is considered a change of placement if:

1. The removal is for more than 10 school days in a row, 34 C.F.R. § 300.536(a)(1); or
2. Your child has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because:
 - a. The series of removals total more than 10 school days in a year, 34 C.F.R. § 300.536(a)(2)(i);
 - b. Your child's behavior is substantially similar to your child's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in a series of removals, 34 C.F.R. § 300.536(a)(2)(ii); and
 - c. Of additional factors such as the length of each removals, the total amount of time your child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another, 34 C.F.R. § 300.536(a)(2)(iii).

The determination of whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change of placement is made by the district. 34 C.F.R. § 300.536(b)(1). If this determination is challenged it is subject to review through due process and judicial proceedings. 34 C.F.R. § 300.536(b)(2).

Children Not Determined Eligible for Special Education and Related Services

If your child has not been determined eligible for special education and related services and violates a code of student conduct, and the school district knew before the discipline violation that your child was a child with a disability then your child can utilize the protections described in this notice. 34 C.F.R. § 300.534(a).

A district is deemed to have knowledge that your child is a child with a disability if, before the behavior that brought about the disciplinary action occurred:

1. You expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel at the district or to your child's teacher that your child is in need of special education and related services, 34 C.F.R. § 300.534(b)(1);
2. You requested an evaluation related to eligibility for special education and related services under Part B of the IDEA, 34 C.F.R. § 300.534(b)(2); or
3. Your child's teacher or other district personnel expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by your child directly to the district's director of special education or to other district supervisory staff, 34 C.F.R. § 300.534(b)(3).

Exceptions to a District's Knowledge

A district would not be deemed to have such knowledge if:

1. You have previously refused consent for an evaluation of your child or you have previously refused special education services, 34 C.F.R. § 300.534(c)(1)(i)-(ii); or
2. Your child has already been evaluated and determined to not be a child with a disability under Part B of IDEA, 34 C.F.R. § 300.534(c)(2).

Conditions that Apply if There is No Basis of Knowledge

If a district does not have knowledge that your child is a child with a disability prior to taking disciplinary measures against your child, your child may be subjected to similar disciplinary consequences that are applied to children without disabilities who engage in similar behaviors. 34 C.F.R. § 300.534(d).

If a request is made for an evaluation of your child during the time period in which your child is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner. 34 C.F.R. § 300.534(d)(2)(i). Until the evaluation is complete, your child remains in the educational placement determined by the district, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services. 34 C.F.R. § 300.534(d)(2)(ii). In Minnesota, regular special education services are provided on the sixth day of a suspension and alternative education services are provided.

Referral to and Action by Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities

A district can report a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities and State law enforcement and judicial authorities can exercise their responsibilities under the law related to crimes committed by a child with a disability. 34 C.F.R. § 300.535(a).

Transmittal of Records

If a district reports a crime committed by a child with a disability, the district must ensure that copies of the child's special education and disciplinary records are transmitted to the appropriate authorities to whom the crime is reported for consideration. However, the district may only transmit copies of your child's special education and disciplinary records to the extent permitted by FERPA. 34 C.F.R. § 300.535(b).

Private School Placement

IDEA does not require the district to pay for the cost of educating your child, including special education and related services, at a private school if the district made FAPE available to your child and you chose to place your child in a private school. 34 C.F.R. § 300.148(a). However, you may be able to recover tuition expenses for a private school placement if you informed the district of your intent to enroll your child in a private school at public expense in a timely manner and if a hearing officer finds that the district did not promptly make FAPE available to your child prior to your child being enrolled in the private school and if the private placement is appropriate. You must inform the district of your intent to place your child in a private placement at public expense at the most recent IEP meeting prior to removal of your child from public school or by written notice to the district at least 10 business days prior to removal of your child from public school. 34 C.F.R. § 300.148(c)-(d).

Your notice must state why you disagree with the district's proposed IEP or placement. If a hearing officer or court finds that the district failed to provide or is unable to provide your child with an appropriate education and that the private placement is appropriate, you may be reimbursed for the cost of the private placement. Failure to tell the school of your intent to enroll your child in a private school at public expense, failure to make your child

available for evaluation prior to placing your child in a private school after the district has given you notice of its intent to evaluate your child, or other unreasonable delay on your part could result in a reduction or denial of reimbursement for the private school placement. 34 C.F.R. § 300.148(d).

A hearing officer cannot reduce or deny the cost of reimbursement if: the district prevented you from being provided with this notice; you did not receive notice of your responsibilities as discussed above in this section; or if compliance with the above requirements would likely result in physical harm to your child and if you failed to provide the required notice because you cannot write in English or if compliance with the above requirements would likely result in serious emotional harm to your child. 34 C.F.R. § 300.148(e).

II. Part C Notice of Procedural Safeguards and Parental Rights

Infant and Toddler Intervention

The material contained in this document is intended to provide general information and guidance regarding special education rights and procedural safeguards afforded to parents of children from birth through age 2 under state and federal law. This document explains a selection of some of the rights and procedural safeguards provided to parents under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 303, and applicable Minnesota laws and regulations; it is not a complete list or explanation of those rights. This notice is not a substitute for consulting with a licensed attorney regarding your specific legal situation. This document does not purport to include a complete rendition of applicable state and federal law, and the law may have changed since this document was issued.

Introduction

This brochure provides an overview of parental special education rights for infant and toddler intervention services, sometimes called procedural safeguards. This Notice of Procedural Safeguards must be given to you when your child is referred under Part C of the IDEA, including when you or the district request a due process hearing. The district must also make available an initial copy of your child's early intervention record, at no cost to you.

Prior Written Notice

The school district or a service provider must provide you with prior written notice within a reasonable timeframe before each time it proposes to initiate or change, or refuses to initiate or change, the identification, evaluation, and education placement of your child or the provision of appropriate infant and toddler intervention services to your child and your child's family. This notice must be given to you before any changes are made and must include sufficient detail to inform you of:

1. The action that is being proposed or refused;
2. An explanation of why the district proposes or refuses to take the action; and
3. All procedural safeguards that are available under Part C of the IDEA, including a description of mediation, how to file a state complaint, and a due process complaint in the provisions, and any timelines under those procedures.

The notice must be written in a language understandable to the general public and provided in your native language unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

If your native language or other mode of communication is not a written language, the public agency, or designated early intervention service provider, must take steps to ensure that the notice is translated orally or by other means to you in your native language or other mode of communication. The provider must also take steps to ensure that you understand the notice; and, that there is written evidence that these requirements have been met.

Native language, when used with respect to an individual who is limited English proficient, means the language normally used by that individual, or in the case of a child, the language normally used by the parents of the child. For evaluations and assessments conducted for the child, native language means the language normally used by the child, if this language is determined developmentally appropriate for the child by the qualified personnel conducting the evaluation or assessment. For an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, or for an individual with no written language, native language means the mode of communication that is normally used by the individual, such as sign language, braille, or oral communication.

For More Information

If you need help understanding any of your procedural rights or anything about your child's education, please contact your child's early childhood special education coordinator, the school district's special education director or the person listed below. This notice must be provided in your native language or other mode of communication you may be using.

ARC Minnesota

952-920-0855

1-833-450-1494

Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health

651-644-7333

1800-528-4511

Minnesota Department of Education

651-582-8689

651-582-8201 (TTY)

Minnesota Disability Law Center

612-332-1441

800-292-4150

612-332-4668 (TTY)

PACER Center

Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights

952-838-9000

800-53-PACER

952-838-0190 (TTY)

SMRLS Education Law Advocacy Project

(Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services)

1-877-696-6529

Parental Consent

Definition of Consent

As a parent, you have the right to give consent to any action proposed by the district. Consent means that you have been fully informed, in your native language, of all information relevant to the activity for which your written permission is sought and that you fully understand and agree in writing with carrying out the activity for which consent is sought. The written consent must describe the activity and list any early intervention records that will be released and to whom. Consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. However if you revoke your consent, that revocation is not retroactive.

When the District Must Obtain Your Consent

There are several situations in which the district must obtain your written consent before acting. The district must obtain your written consent before the following:

1. Administering screening procedures that are used to determine whether your child is suspected of having a disability;
2. Conducting all Part C evaluations and assessments of your child;
3. Providing early intervention services to your child;
4. Using public benefits or private insurance to pay for your child's Part C early intervention services in certain situations; and
5. Disclosing personally identifiable information about you or your child.

As a parent, you also have the right to receive written notice of and to provide written consent to the exchange of information among agencies that is consistent with state and federal law.

Parent's Right to Decline Consent

If you do not provide consent, the district must make reasonable efforts to ensure that you are fully aware of the nature of the evaluation and assessment, or the early intervention services that would be available, and that you understand that your child will not be able to receive the evaluation and assessment or receive early intervention services unless you provide consent. The district may not use the due process hearing procedures in Part B or Part C of the IDEA to challenge your refusal to provide any consent that is required. Thus, if you refuse, in writing, to consent to the initial evaluation or reevaluation of your child the district may not override your written refusal.

Parental Right to Decline Services

You can decide whether or not to accept or decline any early intervention service. You can selectively accept or decline any early intervention service, including declining a service after first accepting it, without jeopardizing other early intervention services your child may receive.

Confidentiality and Personally Identifiable Information

Personally identifiable information is information that includes, but is not limited to, your child's name; your name (parent's name) or other family member's name; your address; your child's address; a personal identifier, such as your child's or your Social Security number; biometric record; another indirect identifier, such as the child's date of birth, place of birth, a mother's maiden name, or a list of personal characteristics; or other information that would make it possible to identify your child with reasonable certainty.

Districts, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), and any other early intervention service providers must protect the confidentiality of any personally identifiable data about you and your child, including information and records they collect, use and maintain, disclose and destroy. Generally, a district or other

participating agency may not disclose personally identifiable information, as defined in Part C of the IDEA, to any party except participating agencies (including the lead agency and early intervention service providers) that are part of the state's Part C system without parental consent unless authorized to do so under the IDEA or for any purpose other than meeting a requirement of that law. Please refer to the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for additional information on consent requirements concerning data privacy under federal law.

Confidentiality provisions under Part C of the IDEA apply from the point in time when your child is referred for early intervention services until the district is no longer required to maintain or no longer maintains the child's information under applicable state or federal laws, whichever is later.

Notice to Parents about Confidentiality

The district must give you notice when your child is referred under Part C of the IDEA that fully informs you about the confidentiality requirements discussed above. This notice should include a description of your child about whom personally identifiable information is maintained, the types of information about your child requested, the method intended to be used in gathering information, including the sources from whom information is gathered, and how the information about your child will be used. This notice must also include a summary of the policies and procedures that the district and providing agencies must follow regarding storage of data about you and your child, disclosure of this data to third parties, and retention and destruction of personally identifiable information. Additionally, this notice must include a description of all of your rights and your child's rights regarding this information, including rights under the Part C confidentiality provisions. Lastly, this notice must include a description of the extent that the notice is provided in the native languages of the various population groups in the state.

Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP)

If your child is under age three and has a disability, you and your child have a right to receive an IFSP. An IFSP is a written plan that is developed by a team to record your goals for your family and your child. An IFSP also lists the services that will best help you and your child reach those goals and describe when, where, and how services will be delivered. You and other family members work with the early intervention service coordinator and other providers (if appropriate) to create the IFSP. You may invite anyone you wish to the IFSP meetings, including an advocate. The IFSP is reviewed at least every six months, or more frequently if requested. You are involved in planning the time, date and place of these meetings to ensure your participation. You may request a meeting to review your child's IFSP at any time, even if one recently took place. A district must provide you with a copy of each of your child's evaluations, assessments, family assessments, and IFSPs as soon as possible after each IFSP meeting at no cost to you.

The Right to Receive Services in Natural Environments

Early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities are focused around your family's and your child's daily routines and are designed to be carried out within regular activities. These services are provided, to the maximum extent appropriate, in natural environments. This helps you and/or your child's other caregivers learn strategies for teaching your child new skills that may be practiced throughout the day. When a service needs to be provided anywhere other than a natural environment, the IFSP team must provide written justification in the IFSP.

Written Annual Notice Relating to Third-Party Billing for IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) Health-Related Services

The school district must obtain your consent before your (or your child's) public benefits or insurance or private insurance information is used to pay for Part C services, if such consent is required.

The district must provide you annual written notice that:

1. Parental consent must be obtained under Part C of the IDEA before the state lead agency or Early Intervention Service Provider discloses personal information for billing purposes;
2. A statement of the no-cost protection provisions in Part C of the IDEA. If you do not provide consent, Part C services must still be made available to you and your child through the IFSP for which you have provided consent;
3. The district will bill medical assistance or Minnesota Care for the health-related services on your child's IFSP;
4. You have the right to receive a copy of education records the district shares with any third party when seeking reimbursement for health-related services on your child's IFSP; and
5. You have a right to withdraw your consent to disclose your child's education records to a third party at any time. If you withdraw consent, the district may no longer share your child's education records to bill a third party for IFSP health-related services. You can withdraw your consent at any time, and your child's IFSP services will not change or stop.

Education Records

Your Access to Records

You have the right to inspect and review all Part C early intervention records about your child and your child's family that are collected, maintained or used under Part C of the IDEA, including records related to evaluations and assessments, screening, eligibility determinations, development and implementation of IFSPs, provision of early intervention services, individual complaints involving your child, or any part of your child's early intervention record. Upon request, the district must give you access to your child's early intervention records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IFSP or any due process hearing. The district must respond to your request immediately, if possible, or within 10 days of the request (excluding weekends and legal holidays).

Your right to inspect and review early intervention records includes the right to:

1. A response from the participating district to reasonable requests for explanations or interpretations of your child's record;
2. Request that the participating district provide copies of your child's early intervention records to you if failure to provide these copies would effectively prevent you from exercising your right to inspect and review the records;
3. Have your representative inspect and review the early intervention records; and
4. Review your child's records as often as you wish, in accordance with state law. State law provides that if you have been shown private data and have been informed of its meaning, that data does not need to be disclosed to you for a period of six months unless a dispute or action is pending or new information is created or collected.

A district may presume that you have the authority to inspect and review records relating to your child unless the district has been provided documentation that you do not have the authority under applicable state laws governing such matters as custody, foster care, guardianship, separation, and divorce.

Under Minnesota state law, education records include most of the information about your child that is held by the school, including evaluations and assessments, eligibility determinations, development and implementation of IFSPs, individual complaints dealing with your child, and any other records about your child and family. However, information held solely by your child's teacher for his or her own instructional use may not be included in the education records.

Disclosure to Health Plan Company

The district may not disclose information contained in your child's IFSP, including diagnosis and treatment information, to a health plan company without your signed consent.

Records on More Than One Child

If any education record includes information on more than one child, you only have the right to inspect and review information relating to your child. You can seek consent to review and inspect education records that include information about children in addition to your own, but the parents of those children have a right to refuse your request for consent.

Record of Access by Others

The district must keep a record of each request for access and who obtains access to early intervention records collected, maintained, or used under Part C about you and your child. Access to these records by you and authorized representatives and employees of the district do not need to be recorded. This record of access must include the name of the individual to whom access was given, and the purpose for which the individual was authorized to use the early intervention records.

List of Types and Locations of Information

Upon your request, the district and MDE must provide you with a list of the types and locations of education records they collect, maintain or use.

Consent to Release Records

Generally, your consent is required before personally identifiable information is released to unauthorized individuals or agencies. The consent must be in writing and must specify the individuals or agencies authorized to receive the information; the nature of the information to be disclosed; the purpose for which the information may be used; and a reasonable expiration date for the authorization to release information. Upon request, the district must provide you with a copy of records it discloses.

Fees for Searching, Retrieving and Copying Records

The district may not charge a fee to search or retrieve records. However, if you request copies, the district may charge a reasonable fee for the copies, unless charging that fee would prevent you from exercising your right to inspect and review the education records because you cannot afford to pay it. A district must provide you with a copy of each of your child's evaluations, assessments, family assessments, and IFSPs as soon as possible after each IFSP meeting at no cost to you.

Amendment of Records at Parent's Request

If you believe that information in your child's early intervention records is inaccurate, misleading, incomplete, or in violation of your child's privacy or other rights or your rights as a parent, you may request that the district amend the record or remove the information.

The district must decide within a reasonable time whether it will amend the records. If the district decides not to amend the records, it must inform you of its refusal to amend the records and inform you that you have the right to a hearing to challenge the district's decision.

Opportunity for a Hearing

Upon your request, the district must provide you with the opportunity for a hearing to challenge information in your child's early intervention records to ensure that it is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of you or your child. You may request a hearing under the procedures set out under Part C of the IDEA or you may request a hearing under Minnesota's due process hearing procedures.

If as a result of the hearing the district decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the privacy or other rights of you or your child, it must amend the information accordingly and inform you in writing.

If, as a result of that hearing, the district decides that the information in your child's early intervention record is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights or other rights of you or your child, it must inform you that you have the right to include a statement of your comments and disagreements alongside the challenged information in your child's early intervention education records. Any explanation placed alongside your child's early intervention education records must be kept by the district as part of your child's early intervention records as long as your child's records are maintained by the district. If your child's early intervention records or the contested portion of your child's records are disclosed by the district to any party, the explanation you submitted must also be disclosed to the party.

Transfer of Records

Minnesota Statutes require that a district, a charter school, or a nonpublic school transfer a student's educational records, including disciplinary records, from a school a student is transferring from to a school in which a student is enrolling within 10 business days of a request.

Destruction of Records

The district must inform you when personally identifiable information collected, maintained, or used by the district is no longer needed in order to provide early intervention services to your child. You have the right to request that education records about the provision of early intervention services to your child under Part C of the IDEA be destroyed upon your request. This information must be destroyed by the district upon receiving your request. However, the district may retain a permanent record of your child's name, date of birth, parent contact information (including address and phone number), names of service coordinators and early intervention service providers, and exit data (including year and age upon exit, and any programs your child entered upon exiting Part C).

Under federal law, destruction means the physical destruction of the record or the removal of personal identifiers from information ensuring that the information is no longer personally identifiable. Thus, your child's record does not need to be physically destroyed to comply with your request to destroy special education related records.

Districts can appropriately comply with this requirement by removing personally identifiable information from your child's records. The choice of destruction method is generally up to the school district.

Despite your request to destroy records, a district can keep certain records necessary to comply with the General Education Provision Act (GEPA), which requires that recipients of federal funds keep records related to the use of those funds. You may want to maintain certain special education records about your child for documentation purposes in the future, such as for applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

The district shall not destroy any education records if there is an outstanding request to inspect or review the records.

Child's Right to a Surrogate Parent

A child with a disability whose parent cannot be identified or located by the district using reasonable efforts, or who is a ward of the state, has the right to have a surrogate parent assigned to them.

The appropriate public agency must determine whether a child needs a surrogate parent and assign a surrogate to the child. In appointing a surrogate parent for a child, the public agency must consult with the agency that has been assigned to care for the child. The public agency must make reasonable efforts to ensure the assignment of a surrogate parent not more than 30 days after a public agency determines that the child needs a surrogate parent.

A surrogate parent may be selected in any way permitted under state law. The appropriate public agency must ensure that the person selected as a surrogate parent is not an employee of any state agency or early intervention service provider that provides services or care to the child or any family member of the child; has no personal or professional interest that conflicts with the interests of the child he or she represents; and has knowledge and skills necessary for adequate representation of the child. In the case of a child who is a ward of the state, the surrogate parent can be appointed by the judge overseeing the child's case, as long as the surrogate parent appointed satisfies the above-mentioned requirements. An individual who qualifies to be a surrogate parent is not an employee of the public agency solely because he or she is paid by the agency to serve as a surrogate parent.

A surrogate parent has the same rights as a parent for all purposes under the Part C regulations. Thus, a surrogate parent may represent a child in all matters related to the evaluation and assessment of the child, development, and implementation of the child's IFSP, including annual evaluations and periodic reviews, the ongoing provision of early intervention services, and any other rights available to the child under the Part C regulations.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Parties are encouraged to resolve disputes over the identification, evaluation, educational placement, manifestation determination, interim alternative educational placement, or the provision of a free appropriate public education to your child through conciliation, mediation, facilitated IFSP team meetings, or through other alternative processes. All ADR options are voluntary on your part and cannot be used to deny or delay your right to a due process hearing. All alternative dispute resolution processes are provided at no cost to you.

Mediation

Mediation is a free, voluntary process to help resolve disputes. You or your district may request mediation at no charge from MDE's Special Education ADR program at 651-582-8689. Mediation is conducted by a qualified and impartial mediator who is trained in effective mediation techniques. The state maintains a list of qualified

mediators who are knowledgeable in laws and regulations relating to the provision of special education and related services. Mediators are selected by the state on a random, rotational basis.

Mediation may not be used to deny or delay your right to a due process hearing or any other rights under Part C of the IDEA. Mediation must be scheduled in a timely manner and must be held in a location that is convenient for both you and the district.

If you and the district reach an agreement to the dispute during the mediation process, the agreement must be set forth in writing. The agreement must be signed by both you (the parent) and a representative of the district who has the authority to bind the district. Parties to the mediation will receive a copy of the agreement. Discussions held during the mediation process are confidential and cannot be used as evidence in any subsequent due process hearing or civil proceeding.

Resolution of a dispute through mediation, or other form of alternative dispute resolution, is not limited to formal disputes arising from your objection and is not limited to the period following the filing of a due process complaint and request for hearing. You may request mediation at any time to resolve a dispute arising under Part C of the IDEA, including matters arising prior to the filing of a due process complaint, regardless of whether a special education complaint or a due process complaint has been filed.

The local primary agency may request mediation on behalf of the involved agencies when disputes arise between agencies regarding responsibilities to coordinate, provide, pay for, or facilitate payment for infant and toddler early intervention services. You or the district can request another mediation to resolve a dispute over implementing the mediation agreement.

An individual who serves as a mediator may not be an employee of the state, the district, or a provider that is involved in the provision of early intervention services or other services to your child under Part C of the IDEA. A mediator cannot have a personal or professional interest that conflicts with their objectivity. A mediator is not considered an employee of the state, the district, or a provider of early intervention services solely because they are paid by the agency to serve as a mediator.

For more information about mediation, please contact MDE's mediation coordinator at 651-582-8689.

Filing a Written State Complaint

You or the district may file a state complaint with MDE. Complaints sent to MDE must:

1. Be in writing and be signed by the individual or organization filing the complaint;
2. Include a statement alleging violations of state or federal special education law or rule related to Part C of the IDEA;
3. State the facts upon which the allegation is based;
4. Include the signature and contact information for the complainant;
5. Include the name and residence of your child, the name of the early intervention service provider, a description of the nature of your child's problem, including facts related to the problem, and a proposed resolution of the problem to the extent known and available to you at the time the complaint is filed, if the alleged violation is related to your specific child; and
6. Allege a violation that occurred not more than **one year** prior to the date that the complaint is received.

The complaint must be sent to:

Minnesota Department Education
Office of General Counsel

Due Process Supervisor
400 NE Stinson Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN 55413-2614
Phone: 651-582-8689
Fax: 651-582-8725
MDE.Dispute-Resolution@state.mn.us

The party filing the complaint, either you or the district, must send a copy of the complaint to the district or early intervention service provider at the same time you or the district files with MDE.

MDE will complete its investigation and issue a written decision within 60 calendar days, unless exceptional circumstances require a longer time or if you and the district agree to extend the timeframe to engage in mediation. You (the parent) or the school district injured-in-fact by the decision may appeal the final complaint decision within 60 days of receiving notice of the final decision.

If a written complaint is received that is also the subject of a due process hearing, or contains multiple issues of which one or more are part of that hearing, the part of the complaint that is being addressed in the due process hearing must be set aside until the conclusion of the hearing.

If an issue is raised in a complaint filed under Part C of the IDEA that has previously been decided in a due process hearing involving the same parties, the hearing decision is binding and the complainant must be informed of this by MDE. Please see the section below for more information about due process hearings.

Impartial Due Process Hearing

For due process hearing procedures for children covered under Part C of the IDEA, Minnesota has chosen to adopt the Part B due process hearing procedures set out in the IDEA.

Filing a Due Process Complaint and Request for Hearing

You, the district, or a provider of early intervention services may file a due process complaint with MDE on any matter relating to the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child, or the provision of early intervention services to your child and your family under Part C of the IDEA. Specifically, a due process hearing can be requested regarding a proposal or refusal to initiate or change your child's evaluation, IFSP, educational placement, or to provide FAPE. The due process complaint must be in writing and must allege a violation of the IDEA that occurred not more than **two years** before the date that you or the early intervention service provider knew, or should have known, about the alleged action that forms the basis of the due process complaint.

This two-year timeline does not apply if you were prevented from filing a due process complaint because the district or an early intervention service provider misrepresented that it had resolved the problem forming the basis of your due process complaint or the district or early intervention service provider failed to provide you with information that was required under the IDEA.

MDE must inform you of any free or low-cost legal and other relevant services available in your area when you or the district file a due process complaint.

An impartial hearing officer will be assigned to your case. MDE maintains a list of individuals who serve as impartial hearing officers. You may not raise issues in a due process hearing that were not raised in the written complaint.

Within 15 days of receiving notice of your due process complaint, and prior to the due process hearing, the school district must arrange for a resolution meeting with you and the relevant members of your child's IFSP Team who have knowledge of the facts alleged in the due process complaint. If the resolution meeting is not held within 15 days of receiving notice of your due process complaint, you may seek the intervention of a hearing officer to begin the due process hearing timeline.

This resolution meeting must include a representative of the district who has decision-making authority and may NOT include an attorney for the district unless an attorney accompanies you. You and the district determine the relevant members of the IFSP team to attend the resolution meeting. The purpose of this meeting is for you to discuss the due process complaint, and the facts that form the basis of the due process complaint, so that the school district has the opportunity to resolve the dispute that is the basis for the due process complaint.

If you do not participate in the resolution meeting, your actions will delay the timelines for the resolution process and a due process hearing until the meeting is held. However, you and the school district may agree in writing to waive the resolution meeting or agree to mediation.

Resolution Period

If the matter is not resolved within 30 days of receipt of your due process complaint, the hearing timelines begin and a due process hearing may occur. If the school district is unable to obtain your participation in the resolution meeting or mediation after reasonable efforts have been made, and the district has documented its efforts to obtain your participation, and the school district does not agree to waive the resolution meeting or to use mediation, the school district may, at the conclusion of the 30-day period, request that a hearing officer dismiss your due process complaint.

Hearing Timeline

The 30-day hearing timeline starts the day after one of the following events:

1. You and the district agree in writing to waive the resolution meeting;
2. After either mediation or the resolution meeting starts, but before the end of the 30-day period, you and the district both agree in writing that no agreement is possible; or
3. You and the district agree to continue the mediation at the end of the 30-day resolution period, but later, you or the district withdraws from the mediation process.

Settlement Agreement

If you and the district reach a resolution at the resolution meeting, you and the district must execute a legally binding agreement that is signed by both you and a representative of the district that has the authority to bind the district; the agreement is enforceable in any state or district court. You or the district may void such an agreement within three days of the agreement's execution.

Procedures for Initiation of a Due Process Hearing

If you wish to have a hearing, you or your attorney must file a due process complaint and request for a due process hearing in writing. The written complaint must be sent to:

Minnesota Department Education
Office of General Counsel
Due Process Hearing Coordinator

400 NE Stinson Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN 55413-2614
Phone: 651-582-8689
Fax: 651-582-8725
MDE.Dispute-Resolution@state.mn.us

All written requests for a due process hearing must include:

1. The name and address of your child;
2. The name of the early intervention service provider serving your child;
3. A description of the nature of the problem, including your view of the facts; and
4. A proposed resolution of the problem to the extent known and available to you at the time of filing your due process complaint.

Upon receiving a written due process complaint from you or the district, MDE must give you a copy of the procedural safeguard notice, which includes a description of your rights at a due process hearing. If you or the district file a due process complaint with MDE, you must provide the other party with a copy of the complaint at the same time you file with MDE.

If you file a due process complaint and you did not previously receive a prior written notice from the district about the subject matter of the due process complaint request, the district must send you a written explanation of why the district proposed or refused to take the action raised in the due process complaint within 10 days of receiving the due process complaint. This explanation must include a description of other options considered by the IFSP team; why those options were rejected; a description of each evaluation procedure; assessment, record, or report that the district or early intervention service provider used as the basis for the proposed or refused action; and a description of the factors relevant to the district's proposal or refusal decision.

Upon receiving your due process complaint, the district must also send you a written response that specifically addresses the issues you raised in the due process complaint within 10 days of receiving the request.

The district or early intervention service provider can assert that your due process complaint does not meet the requirements under state law. A due process complaint is considered sufficient unless the party who received the due process complaint notifies the hearing officer and the other party in writing within 15 days of receiving the complaint that they believe the due process complaint does not meet statutory requirements. The hearing officer must determine whether the due process complaint meets statutory requirements within five days of receiving the complaint and immediately notify the parties in writing of that determination.

MDE maintains a list of qualified hearing officers. Upon receipt of a written due process complaint, MDE will appoint a hearing officer from that list to conduct the hearing. Below are a few of your rights at hearing. This is not a complete list of rights.

Both you and the district have the right to:

1. Be accompanied and advised by counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training with respect to early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities;
2. Present evidence and confront, cross-examine, and compel the attendance of witnesses;
3. Prohibit the introduction of any evidence at the hearing that has not been disclosed at least five business days before the hearing, including evaluation data and recommendations based on that data that are intended to be used at the hearing; and
4. Receive a written or electronic, verbatim record of the hearing transcript and/or the findings of fact and decisions.

As the parent, you have the right to:

1. Decide whether or not to have your child will be present at the due process hearing. Infants and toddlers do not need to be present at due process hearings, however, you, as the parent, can decide whether or not your infant or toddler will attend the due process hearing;
2. Open the hearing to the public; and
3. Receive a copy of the record or transcript of the hearing and the hearing officer's findings of fact, conclusions of law and decisions made at no cost.

Amending a Due Process Complaint

You or the district may amend your due process complaint only if the other party consents in writing to the amendment and is given an opportunity to resolve the due process complaint through a resolution meeting or if the hearing officer grants permission. The hearing officer may only grant permission not later than five days before the due process hearing begins.

If you or the district files an amended due process complaint, the timelines for the resolution meeting and the resolution period begin again with the filing of the amended complaint.

Disclosure of Additional Evidence before a Hearing and Prehearing Conference

A prehearing conference must be held within five business days of the date the commissioner appoints a hearing officer. The hearing officer must initiate the prehearing conference. This conference can be held in person, at a location within the district, or by telephone. The hearing officer must create a verbatim record of the prehearing conference, which is available to you or the district upon request. At the prehearing conference, the hearing officer must accomplish the following: identify the questions that must be answered to resolve the dispute and elimination claims and complaints that are without merit; set a scheduling order for the hearing and additional prehearing activities; determine if the hearing can be disposed of without an evidentiary hearing and, if so; establish the management, control, and location of the hearing to ensure its fair, efficient, and effective disposition.

At least five business days before a hearing, you and the district must disclose to each other all evaluations of your child completed by that date and recommendations based on those evaluations that are intended to be used at the hearing. A hearing officer may refuse to allow you to introduce any undisclosed evaluations or recommendations at the hearing without consent of the other party.

The Hearing Decision

The hearing officer must reach a final decision in the due process hearing and give a copy of the decision to each party not later than 45 days after the 30-day period or within the adjusted time periods. The hearing officer is encouraged to accelerate the timeline to 30 days for a child under the age of three whose needs change rapidly and who requires quick resolution of a dispute. The hearing decision timeline may be extended if the hearing officer determines that good cause exists. The hearing officer must conduct oral arguments in a hearing at a time and place that is reasonably convenient to you and your child. The hearing officer's decision whether an infant or toddler was appropriately identified, evaluated, or placed, or whether the infant or toddler with a disability and the family were appropriately provided early intervention services under Part C of the IDEA, must be based on substantive grounds. The hearing decision is final unless you or the district files a civil action. A hearing officer does not have the authority to amend a decision except for clerical and mathematical errors.

Separate for Due Process Complaint

You have the right to file a separate due process complaint on an issue separate from a due process complaint already filed.

Complaints and Hearings Database

Final decisions on special education complaints and due process hearings are available to the public on [MDE's Complaint and Hearing Decisions web page](#). Decisions available in the database are redacted and all personally identifiable information is removed.

Civil Action

When you or the district disagrees with the findings or decisions made by a hearing officer, either party may file a court action and appeal the decision. The action may be brought in federal district court or the state court of appeals. Different standards of review apply in each court. An appeal to the state court of appeals must be made within 60 calendar days of your receipt of the decision. An appeal to federal district court must be made within 90 days of the date of the decision. If you file an appeal, an impartial review of the findings and decision appealed will be made.

Placement During a Hearing or Civil Action

During a hearing or court action, unless you and the district agree otherwise, your child must continue to receive the appropriate early intervention services in the setting identified and that you consented to in the IFSP. If the complaint involves an application for initial services under Part C of the IDEA, your child must continue to receive those services that are not in dispute.

Expedited Due Process Hearings

You or a school district may file a written due process complaint and request for an expedited due process hearing.

Expedited hearings must be held within 20 school days of the date the expedited due process complaint is filed. The hearing officer must issue a decision within 10 school days after the hearing. A resolution meeting must occur within seven days of receiving the expedited due process complaint, unless you and the school district agree in writing to either waive the resolution meeting or use the mediation process. The expedited due process hearing may proceed unless the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties within 15 days of receiving the expedited due process complaint.



IV. Interagency Agreements the District has Entered

The Northfield Public School District has entered in the following interagency agreements or joint powers board agreements for eligible children, ages 3 to 21, to establish agency responsibility that assures that interagency services are coordinated, provided, and paid for, and that payment is facilitated from public and private sources:

A. Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative

- a. This agreement outlines the shared programs between the four districts to provide Setting IV EBD programs to students needing one of the following programs: K12 Day Treatment, EBD behavioral programming K-12, Students with Unique Needs K-12, and 18-22 Secondary Transition Education Program.
- b. Terms of Agreement: Faribault, Northfield, Medford and Owatonna Public Schools entered into Joint Powers Agreement for Setting IV and 18-22 Secondary Transition Education Program.
- c. The agreement was entered into in October, 2015, and remains in effect until two-thirds of the members leave the cooperative.



V. Special Education Advisory Council

In order to increase the involvement of parents of children with disabilities in district policy making and decision making, the Northfield Public School District has a special education advisory council.

- A. A. Northfield Public Schools District's Special Education Advisory Council is individually established
- B. Northfield Public Schools District's Special Education Advisory Council is not a subgroup of an existing committee.
- C. At least half of the Northfield Public Schools District's parent advisory councils' members are parents of students with a disability.
 - a. The district has a nonpublic school located in its boundaries and the parent advisory council includes at least one member who is a parent of a nonpublic school student with a disability, or an employee of a nonpublic school if no parent of a nonpublic school student with a disability is available to serve.
- D. Northfield Public Schools District's Special Education Advisory Council meets tri-annually, once each fall, winter, and spring.
- E. The operational procedures of Northfield Public Schools District's Special Education Advisory Council are attached as Appendix C



Appendix C: Operational Procedures of the Northfield Public Schools Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)

I. Authority and Purpose (as per MN Statute 125A.24)

A. The Northfield Public Schools Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) is established in accordance with Minnesota Statute 125A.24 to increase the involvement of parents of children with disabilities in district policy making and decision making. B. The Council shall act in an advisory capacity to the School Board and District Administration concerning policies, issues, and decisions affecting students with disabilities.

II. Membership and Composition

A. Composition: The Council is composed of volunteers including parents, district staff, and community members. B. Statutory Requirement: At least half (50%) of the designated members must be parents of students with a disability currently enrolled in Northfield Public Schools (ISD #659). C. Nonpublic Representation: The Council must include at least one member who is a parent of a nonpublic school student with a disability, or an employee of a nonpublic school, if such a parent is unavailable to serve. D. Recruitment and Appointment: * Annual Recruitment: Annually, a survey will be distributed to families seeking new volunteer members. * Term of Appointment: Members shall serve a term of two (2) years, renewable upon mutual agreement. * District Liaison: The Director of Special Services, or a designee, shall serve as the non-voting District Liaison to the SEAC.

III. Officers and Duties

A. **Officers:** The Council shall elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair. B. Election: Officers shall be elected annually by a simple majority vote of the Council members present at the first meeting of the school year. C. Chair Duties: Preside at all meetings, prepare meeting agendas in consultation with the District Liaison, and officially present recommendations to the School Board or Administration.

IV. Meetings and Public Access

A. **Frequency:** The SEAC shall meet three times annually, in line with district committee meeting schedules. B. Quorum: A quorum necessary to conduct business and vote on recommendations shall be a simple majority of

appointed members. C. Public Meeting: One (1) of the three annual meetings shall be designated as open to the public to solicit community input. D. Public Notice: Notice of all meetings, including time, date, and location, shall be posted on the district website at least one week in advance. E. Decision Making: Recommendations to the district shall be approved by a simple majority vote of the quorum present.

V. Review and Amendment

A. These Operational Procedures shall be reviewed by the SEAC at least once every three years. B. Any proposed amendment to these procedures must be shared with the full Council at one meeting and voted on at a subsequent meeting, requiring a two-thirds majority vote of all appointed members for adoption.



VI. Assurances

Yes: Assurance given

Citation and Authority: Code of Federal Regulations, section 300.201: Consistency with State policies. The Northfield Public School District, in providing for the education of children with disabilities within its jurisdiction, has in effect policies, procedures, and programs that are consistent with the State policies and procedures established under sections 300.101 through 300.163, and sections 300.165 through 300.174. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. § 1413(a)(1)).

34 C.F.R. §§ 300.200 through 300.213

Total Special Education System (TSES)

School Board Presentation
Updated November 2025

Strategic Plan

VISION

We prepare every student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society.

Reaching Out, Reaching Up: THE 2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION

We prepare every student for lifelong success by developing critical thinkers who are curious and ready to engage in our society.

BENCHMARKS

1 All children are ready for kindergarten .	2 All students are connected to the community .	3 All students are at grade level in reading and mathematics by the end of third and sixth grades.
4 All students exhibit physical, social and emotional well-being .	5 All students have a connection with a caring adult beyond their parents as they transition to middle school.	6 All students have interests, goals and a vision for the future by the end of eighth grade.
7 All students graduate from high school with a plan to reach their full potential.	8 All employees report satisfaction in the workplace.	9 All parents report satisfaction with their children's educational experience.
10 The district maintains 14% of its annual expenditures in its unassigned fund balance to ensure financial stability .	11 Community education provides relevant and accessible learning opportunities for all residents.	Note: The first seven benchmarks are aligned with the language identified by Northfield Promise, a collective impact consortium of 20 community organizations committed to helping Northfield's youth thrive "from cradle to career."



STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS



People

We prioritize the engagement, satisfaction, and support of every student, staff member, and family.



Learner Outcomes

We prepare every student to be academically and socially ready to choose their preferred pathway after high school graduation.



Equity

We ensure that every child has a fair opportunity to reach their full potential.



Communication

We communicate effectively and transparently with all stakeholders.



Stewardship

We responsibly manage our personnel, finances, property, time and environmental impact.



Partnerships

We seek community partnerships that accelerate student achievement of district benchmarks.

What is TSES?

The Total Special Education System plan outlines how Northfield Public Schools identifies, evaluates, and serves students with disabilities

Ensures compliance with state and federal law

Guides special education services across all grade levels

Key Components

Child study procedures (identification & evaluation)

Methods of providing services

Administration and management

Interagency agreements

Special Education Advisory Council

Child Find & Identification

Age Ranges

Birth - Age 2: Early intervention services

Ages 3-6: Developmental delay or categorical disability

Ages 7-22: Categorical disabilities under IDEA

Identification Systems

Public school students

Nonpublic school students

Students not attending school

Screening & referral procedures

Specific Learning Disability (SLD) Identification

Northfield uses the Discrepancy Model

Inadequate achievement despite appropriate instruction

Disorder in psychological processes

Severe discrepancy between ability and achievement (≥ 1.75 standard deviations below the mean)

Service Delivery Methods

Direct Specialized Instruction

Small group in special education setting

Small group in general education setting

Co-teaching in general education

Consultation & Related Services

Speech/Language Services

Occupational Therapy

Physical Therapy

School Psychological Services

School Social Work

Adaptive Physical Education

Service Locations & Programs

Northfield District Sites

Northfield High School

Northfield Middle School

Northfield Area Learning Center

Bridgewater Elementary

Spring Creek Elementary

Greenvale Park Elementary

Community Education Center

Additional Options

Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative

Setting IV programs

EBD services

18-22 transition programs

Homebound services

Nonpublic school services

Administration & Management

Sara Pratt

Director of Special Services

Program development

Staff supervision

Budget administration

Compliance oversight

Caleb Davidson

Assistant Director

Operational support

Program coordination

Staff development

Andrea Robbins

ECSE Coordinator

Early childhood leadership

Child Study Team facilitation

Interagency Collaboration

Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative

Member Districts:

Faribault • Northfield • Medford •
Owatonna

Shared Programs:

Setting IV EBD Day Treatment
EBD Behavioral Programming
Students with Unique Needs
18-22 Transition Education

Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)

Purpose & Composition

Increases parent involvement in district policy making

At least 50% parents of students with disabilities

District staff and community members

Nonpublic school representation

2-year renewable terms

Operations

Meets 3 times annually (Fall, Winter, Spring)

Provides recommendations to School Board and administration

Reviews district special education policies and programs

TSES Compliance & Summary

Northfield maintains full compliance with federal and state special education requirements

Key Strengths

Comprehensive child find systems

Timely evaluation processes

Full range of service options

Active parent advisory council

Next Steps

Annual TSES review

Continued SEAC engagement

Staff development

Program evaluation

Northfield Public Schools
Policy Committee Recommendations

November 10, 2025

Policy	Changes
502: Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions and Student's Person	Change Type: Regular Review • Updated purpose statement. • In section III.E. updated the definition of designee. • In section IV. H removed the statement regarding providing a copy of this policy to each student who uses a locker and linked the Student Citizenship Handbook. • In section V.B. updated sentence for clarity. • In section VII linked the Student Citizenship Handbook. • Update of legal reference.
505: Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials	Change Type: Regular Review • Updated the definitions in section III to include electronic distribution of materials. • In section VI.A changed Student Discipline Policy to Student Citizenship Handbook. • Update of policy names in cross references.
513: Student Promotion, Retention, and Program Design	Change Type: Regular Review • Updated purpose statement. • Changed “guardians” to “caregivers.” • Updated cross references.
513.1: Determination of Legal Age of Students	Change Type: Regular Review • Updated purpose statement. • Added a reference to Policy 513.2 in section II.2. • Updated age verification instructions to reflect that enrollment of students is done at the district office and not at the building level.
513.2: Early Entrance Into Kindergarten	Change Type: Regular Review • Updated purpose statement. • Changed “identity group” to “grade level” in section II.
513.3: Advanced Grade Placement <u>Academic Acceleration</u>	Change Type: Regular Review • Updated purpose statement. • Changed “identity group” to “grade level” in section II. • Changed the term “Advanced Grade Placement” to “Academic Acceleration” to parallel the

	language used in Policy 513.
514: Bullying Prohibition	Change Type: Regular Review • Updated purpose statement. • Added a reference to the online reporting form.

502 SEARCH OF STUDENT LOCKERS, DESKS, PERSONAL POSSESSIONS AND STUDENT'S PERSON

I. PURPOSE

In alignment with the district's strategic commitment to people, The purpose of this policy is to provide for a safe and healthful educational environment by enforcing the Northfield School District's policies against contraband.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Lockers and Personal Possessions Within a Locker.** Pursuant to Minnesota statutes, school lockers are the property of the district. At no time does the district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school officials must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.
- B. Desks.** School desks are the property of the district. At no time does the district relinquish its exclusive control of desks provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of desks may be conducted by school officials or the classroom teacher for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.
- C. Personal Possessions and Student's Person.** The personal possessions of students and/or a student's person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.
- D.** A violation of this policy occurs when students use lockers and desks for unauthorized purposes or to store contraband. A violation occurs when students carry contraband on their person or in their personal possessions.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A.** "Contraband" means any unauthorized item possession of which is prohibited by district policy and/or law. It includes but is not limited to weapons and "look-alikes," alcoholic beverages, controlled substances and "look-alikes," overdue books and other materials belonging to the district, and stolen property.
- B.** "Personal possessions" includes but is not limited to purses, backpacks, bookbags, packages and clothing.
- C.** "Reasonable suspicion" means that a school official has grounds to believe that the search will result in evidence of a violation of district policy, rules, and/or

law. Reasonable suspicion may be based on a school official's personal observation, a report from a student, parent or staff member, a student's suspicious behavior, a student's age and past history or record of conduct both in and out of the school context, or other reliable sources of information.

- D. "Reasonable scope" means that the scope and/or intrusiveness of the search is reasonably related to the objectives of the search. Factors to consider in determining what is reasonable include the seriousness of the suspected infraction, the reliability of the information, the necessity of acting without delay, the existence of exigent circumstances necessitating an immediate search and further investigation (e.g., to prevent violence, serious and immediate risk of harm or destruction of evidence), and the age of the student.
- E. "School official" means superintendent, building principal or their designee. For the purposes of this policy the assistant principal, dean and instructional coaches for behavior ~~parking lot/security monitors~~ are considered designees.

IV. SEARCH PROCESSES

- A. School officials may inspect the interiors of lockers and desks for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.
- B. School officials may inspect the personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person based on a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. A search of personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.
- C. As soon as practicable after a search of personal possessions within a locker pursuant to this policy, the school officials must provide notice of the search to students whose possessions were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.
- D. Whenever feasible, a search of a person shall be conducted in private by a school official matching the gender preference stated by the student being searched ~~of the preferred gender~~. The person being searched may request the search to be conducted by a school official of the gender the person being searched prefers. A second school official of the preferred gender shall be present as an observer during the search of a person whenever feasible.
- E. A strip search is a search involving the removal of coverings or clothing from private areas. Mass strip searches, or body cavity searches, are prohibited. Strip searches will be conducted only in circumstances involving imminent danger.
- F. A school official conducting any other search may determine when it is appropriate to have a second official present as an observer.
- G. School officials may ask that law enforcement ~~to~~ assist with any search.
- H. A copy of this policy will be included in the [Student Citizenship Handbook](#), posted on the district website, and disseminated in any other way which school

officials deem appropriate. ~~The district shall provide a copy of this policy to a student when the student is given use of a locker.~~

V. DIRECTIVES AND GUIDELINES

- A. A school official conducting any search will notify the parent/guardian of the student, unless the student is 18 years or older and has specifically requested the parent/guardian not be informed of educational data.
- B. If a teacher or staff member has grounds to believe that a search will result in evidence of a violation of district policy, rules, and/or law, they must inform a school official. Only school officials ~~only~~ may conduct a search.
- C. School administration may establish reasonable directives and guidelines which address specific needs of the district, such as use of tape in lockers, standards of cleanliness and care, posting of pin-ups and posters which may constitute sexual harassment, etc.

VI. SEIZURE OF CONTRABAND

If a search yields contraband, school officials will seize the item and, where appropriate, turn it over to legal officials for ultimate disposition.

VII. VIOLATIONS

A student found to have violated this policy and/or the directives and guidelines implementing it shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the district's [Student Citizenship Handbook Discipline Policy](#), which may include suspension, exclusion, or expulsion, and the student may, when appropriate, be referred to legal officials.

Policy 502 Search of Student Lockers Desks, Personal Possessions and Student's Person

Adopted: 08.28.2006; Updated: 12.2014, 08.22.2022, INSERT DATE

Board of Education

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659

Northfield, Minnesota

Legal References: U.S. Const., amend. IV
Minn. Const., art. I, §10
New Jersey v. T.L.O., 469 U.S. 325, 105 S.Ct. 733, 83 L.Ed.2d 720 (1985)
Minn. Stat. §121A.72 (School Locker Policy)
G.C. v. Owensboro Public Schools, 711 F.3d 623 (6th Cir. 2013)

Cross References: Board Policy 417 (Chemical Use and Abuse)
Board Policy 418 (Drug-Free Workplace / Drug-Free School)
Board Policy 501 (School Weapons)
Board Policy 506 (Student Discipline)

505 DISTRIBUTION OF NONSCHOOL-SPONSORED MATERIALS ON SCHOOL PREMISES BY STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect the exercise of students' and employees' free speech rights, taking into consideration the educational objectives and responsibilities of the Northfield School District.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The district recognizes that students and employees have the right to distribute, at a reasonable time and place, and in a reasonable manner, nonschool-sponsored material on school property, while at the same time it is the school board's responsibility to preserve the integrity of the educational objectives and responsibilities of the district.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Distribute" or "Distribution" means the electronic or physical circulation or dissemination of material by means that includes but is not limited to ~~of~~ handing out free copies, selling or offering copies for sale, accepting donations for copies, posting or displaying material physically or digitally, or placing or emailing material in or to internal staff or student mailboxes (physical or electronic).
- B. "Nonschool-sponsored material" and/or "unofficial material" includes all materials or objects intended for distribution, both in printed or digital formats, except school newspapers, employee newsletters, literary magazines, yearbooks or material produced in classes as a part of the curriculum and other publications funded and/or sponsored or authorized by the school. Examples of nonschool-sponsored materials include but are not limited to leaflets, brochures, buttons, badges, flyers, petitions, posters, newsletters, emails, texts, and underground newspapers whether written by students or employees or others, and tangible objects.
- C. "Obscene to minors" means:
 - 1. The average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the material, taken as a whole, appeals to the salacious interest of minors of the age to whom distribution is requested;
 - 2. The material depicts or describes, in a manner that is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community concerning how such conduct should be presented to minors of the age to whom distribution is requested, sexual conduct, excretory functions, or lewd exhibition; and
 - 3. The material, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.
- D. "Minor" means any person under the age of eighteen (18).
- E. "Material and substantial disruption" of a normal school activity is defined as any

disruption which interferes with or impedes the implementation of a compulsory or voluntary school activity.

In order for expression to be considered disruptive, there must exist specific facts upon which the likelihood of disruption can be forecast, including past experience in the school, current events influencing student activities and behavior, and instances of actual or threatened disruption relating to the written material in question.

- F. “School activities” means any activity sponsored by the school including, but not limited to, classroom work, library activities, physical education classes, official assemblies and other similar gatherings, school athletic contests, ~~band~~ concerts, school plays and other theatrical productions, and in-school lunch periods.
- G. “Libelous” and “slanderous” are a false and unprivileged statement about a specific individual that tends to harm the individual’s reputation or to lower that individual in the esteem of the community.

IV. GUIDELINES

- A. Requests for distribution of nonschool-sponsored material will be reviewed by the administration on a case-by-case basis. However, distribution of the materials listed below is always prohibited. Material is prohibited that:
 - 1. is obscene to minors;
 - 2. is libelous or slanderous;
 - 3. is pervasively indecent or vulgar or contains any indecent or vulgar language or representations, with a determination made as to the appropriateness of the material for the age level of students to which it is intended;
 - 4. advertises or promotes any product or service not permitted to minors by law;
 - 5. advocates violence or other illegal conduct;
 - 6. constitutes insulting or fighting words, the very expression of which injures or harasses other people;
 - 7. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or the manner of distribution, it will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, will cause the commission of unlawful acts or the violation of lawful school regulations.
- B. In making decisions regarding the time, place, and manner of distribution, the administration will consider factors including, but not limited to, the following:
 - 1. whether the material is educationally related;
 - 2. the extent to which distribution is likely to cause disruption of or interference with the district’s educational objectives, discipline, or school activities;
 - 3. whether the materials can be distributed from the office or other isolated location so as to minimize disruption of traffic flow in hallways;

4. the quantity or size of materials to be distributed;
5. whether distribution would require assignment of district staff, use of district equipment, or other resources;
6. whether distribution would require that nonschool persons be present on the school grounds;
7. whether the materials are a solicitation for goods or services not requested by the recipients.

V. TIME, PLACE, AND MANNER OF DISTRIBUTION

- A. The time, place, and manner of distribution will be solely within the discretion of the administration, consistent with the provisions of this policy.
- B. No one shall coerce a student or staff member to accept any nonschool-sponsored material ~~publications~~.

VI. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- A. Distribution by any student of nonschool-sponsored material prohibited herein or in violation of the provisions of time, place and manner of distribution as described above will be halted and disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the district's [Student Discipline Policy Citizenship Handbook](#).
- B. Distribution by any employee of nonschool-sponsored material prohibited herein or in violation of the provisions of time, place and manner of distribution as described above will be halted and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, in accordance with any individual contract, collective bargaining agreement, district policies and procedures, and/or governing statute.
- ~~A-C.~~ Any other party violating this policy will be requested to leave the school property immediately and, if necessary, the police will be called.

VII. NOTICE OF POLICY TO STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES

A copy of this policy will be posted on the district's website.

VIII. IMPLEMENTATION

The district administration may develop guidelines and procedures necessary to implement this policy.

Policy 505 Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees

Adopted: 04.23.2007; Reviewed: 01.27.2022; Updated: INSERT DATE

Board of Education
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659
Northfield, Minnesota ~~MN~~

Legal References:

U. S. Const., amend. I
Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260, 108 S.Ct. 562, 98 L.Ed.2d 592 (1988)
Bethel Sch. Dist. No. 403 v. Fraser, 478 U.S. 675, 106 S.Ct. 3159, 92 L.Ed.2d 549 (1986)
Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503, 89 S.Ct. 733, 21 L.Ed.2d 731 (1969)
Bystrom v. Fridley High School, 822 F.2d 747 (8th Cir. 1986)
Roark v. South Iron R-1 School Dist., 573 F.3d 556 (8th Cir. 2009)
Victory Through Jesus Sports Ministry Foundation v. Lee's Summit R-7 School Dist., 640 F.3d 329 (8th Cir. 2011), cert. denied 565 U.S., 1036, 132 S.Ct. 592 (2011)

Cross References:

Board Policy 403 (~~Discipline, Suspension, and~~ Dismissal of School District Employees)
Board Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
Board Policy 512 (School-Sponsored Student Publications and Activities)
Board Policy 904 (Distribution of Materials on School District Property by Nonschool Persons)

Policy 513.1 DETERMINATION OF LEGAL AGE OF STUDENTS FOR SCHOOL ADMISSION

I. PURPOSE

In alignment with the district's strategic commitment to learner outcomes, ~~The~~ purpose of this policy is to define how Northfield Public Schools will verify evidence of age for kindergarten enrollment.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Minnesota Statute 120A.20 requires that "A person shall not be admitted to a public school

1. As a kindergarten student, unless the student is at least five years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the student seeks admission commences, or
2. As a first grade student, unless the student is at least six years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the student seeks admission commences or has completed kindergarten; except that any school board may establish a policy for admission of selected pupils at an earlier age. Refer to [Policy 513.2](#) and its associated [procedures](#).

The district is obligated to comply with state law. Therefore, in order to verify the age of a student applying for admission to Northfield Public Schools, the ~~district building principal~~ principal will require either an official birth certificate issued by the county of birth, a hospital birth certificate provided the child's name was originally included on it, or other record, deemed satisfactory by the superintendent or designee ~~building principal~~, which provides evidence of age.

Policy 513.1 Determination of Legal Age of Students for School Admission

Adopted: 03.12.2007; Reviewed: 02.24.2022; Updated: INSERT DATE

Board of Education

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659

Northfield, Minnesota

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. 120A.20 (Admission to Public School)

Policy 513.2 EARLY ENTRANCE INTO KINDERGARTEN

I. PURPOSE

In alignment with the district's strategic commitment to learner outcomes, ~~the purpose~~ of this policy is to establish the process to request early entrance into kindergarten in the Northfield School District.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Children shall be five years of age on or before September 1 of the year in which they start kindergarten and six years of age on or before September 1 of the year in which they start first grade. When a student has successfully completed an accredited kindergarten program, he or she may be placed in first grade, at the parents' request, regardless of age. Early entrance to kindergarten will be considered if a child's fifth birthday falls on a date after September 1, and before October 1, provided that the child demonstrates superior levels of intellectual, academic, and social development as specified by the [early entrance procedures](#). Such decisions shall be made cautiously due to the possible negative consequences for a student who spends their ~~his/her~~ school career as the youngest member in their grade level identity group.

A request must be made in writing directly to the elementary school principal no later than May 1 of the year for which early entrance is requested. An exception may be permitted at the sole discretion of the superintendent ~~of schools~~.

Policy 513.2 Early Entrance into Kindergarten

Adopted: 03.12.2007; Updated: 02.18.2009, 02.2010, INSERT DATE; Reviewed: 02.24.2022

Board of Education

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659

Northfield, Minnesota

Policy 513.3 ~~Advanced Grade Placement~~ ACADEMIC ACCELERATION

I. PURPOSE

In alignment with the district's commitments to learner outcomes and equity, the purpose of this policy is to establish ~~advanced grade placement~~ guidelines for academic acceleration for students enrolled in the Northfield School District.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Northfield Board of Education to allow ~~advanced grade placement~~ academic acceleration (sometimes called grade skipping) provided that a child demonstrates specified superior levels of intellectual, academic, adaptive and/or physical development; and, in the judgment of school personnel, will benefit from such placement. ~~Such decisions shall be made cautiously due to the possible negative consequences for a student who spends his/her school career as the youngest member in the identity group.~~ Careful consideration should be made when considering academic acceleration.

Applications for ~~advanced grade placement~~ academic acceleration must be submitted in writing to the principal by the parents/guardians seeking academic acceleration ~~advanced grade placement~~ for their child. The district shall have 30 school days to complete the assessment.

Policy 513.3 Advanced Grade Placement

Adopted: 1.26.2007; Reviewed: 02.24.2022; Updated: INSERT DATE

Board of Education

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659

Northfield, Minnesota

Policy 513 STUDENT PROMOTION, RETENTION, AND PROGRAM DESIGN

I. PURPOSE

In alignment with the district's strategic commitments to learner outcomes and equity,
~~This policy provides guidance on student promotion, retention, and program design for Northfield School District's staff, parents, caregivers, and students, aligning with the district's vision and commitment to learner outcomes and equity.~~

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Board of Education expects all students to achieve an acceptable level of academic proficiency. Parental assistance, tutorial and remedial programs, counseling, and other appropriate services shall be coordinated and utilized to the greatest extent possible to help students succeed in school.

- A. **Promotion.** Students who achieve at levels deemed acceptable by local and state standards shall be promoted to the next grade level at the completion of each school year.
- B. **Retention.** Retention of a student may be considered when professional staff and parents/~~guardians~~ caregivers feel that it is in the best interest of the student. Physical development, maturity, and emotional factors shall be considered, as well as scholastic achievement. The district has adopted [procedures](#) for retention. The superintendent's decision shall be final.
- C. **Program Design.**
 - 1. The superintendent, with participation of the professional staff and parents/~~guardians~~ caregivers, shall develop and implement programs to challenge students that are consistent with the needs of students at every level. A process to assess and evaluate students for program assignment shall be developed in coordination with such programs. Opportunities for special programs and placement outside of the district shall also be developed as additional options. All programs will be aligned with creating comprehensive achievement and civic readiness.
 - 2. The district may identify students, locally develop programs and services addressing instructional and affective needs, provide staff development, and evaluate programs to provide gifted and talented students with challenging and appropriate educational programs and services.
 - 3. The district must adopt guidelines for assessing and identifying students for participation in gifted and talented programs and services consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11. The guidelines should include the use of:
 - a. Multiple objective criteria.
 - b. Assessments and procedures that are valid and reliable, fair, and based on current theory and research. Assessments and procedures should be sensitive to under-represented groups, including, but not

limited to, low-income, minority, twice-exceptional, and English learners.

4. The district ~~must adopt~~ has adopted [Policy 513.3](#) and its associated [procedures](#) for the academic acceleration of gifted and talented students. These procedures will include how the district will:
 - a. Assess a student's readiness and motivation for acceleration.
 - b. Match the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum to a student to achieve the best type of academic acceleration for a student.
5. The district ~~must adopt~~ has adopted [Policy 513.2](#) and its associated [procedures](#) consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.02 for early admission to kindergarten or first grade of gifted or talented learners consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, subdivision 2, clause (2). The procedures must be sensitive to under-represented groups.

Policy 513 Student Promotion, Retention, and Program Design

Adopted: 10.22.2007; Updated: 05.23.2022, 07.10.2023; INSERT DATE; Statutory Update: 10.28.2024

Board of Education

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659

Northfield, Minnesota

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 (School District Process for Reviewing Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement Goals: Striving for Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.15 (Gifted and Talented Program)

Minn. Stat. § 123B.143, subd. 1 (Superintendents)

Minn. Stat. § 124.D02 (School Board Powers: Enrollment)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 614 (School District Testing Plan and Procedure)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 615 (~~Basic Standards~~ Testing Accommodations, Modifications, and Exemptions for IEPs, Section 504 Plans, ~~Accommodation~~ and LEP Students)
~~MSBA/MASA Model Policy 617 (School District Insurance of Preparatory and High School Standards)~~
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 618 (Assessment of Standard Achievement)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 620 (Credit for Learning)

POLICY 514 BULLYING PROHIBITION

I. PURPOSE

A safe and civil environment is necessary to prepare every student for lifelong success. ~~learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships.~~ Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with a student's ability to learn and/or a teacher's ability to educate students in a safe environment. The Northfield School District cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of the district and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of the district in its normal operations, the district intends to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond to, remediate and discipline for those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The purpose of this policy is to assist the district in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, reprisal, retaliation, and other similar disruptive and detrimental behavior.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited:
 - 1. On the school premises, on district property, at school functions or activities, and on school transportation.
 - 2. By the use of electronic technology and communications on the school premises, during the school functions or activities, on the school transportation, or on the school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists.
 - 3. By use of electronic technology and communications off the school premises to the extent such use substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment.
- B. A school-aged child who voluntarily participates in a public school activity, such as a co-curricular or extracurricular activity, is subject to the policy provisions applicable to the public school students participating in the activity.
- C. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their willful indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying or other prohibited conduct that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the district or the safety or welfare of the student or other students, or materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits,

services, or privileges. This policy also applies to an act of cyberbullying regardless of whether such act is committed on or off district property and/or with or without the use of district resources. This policy also applies to sexual exploitation.

- D. Malicious and sadistic conduct involving race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, religion, sexual harassment, and sexual orientation and gender identity as defined in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 363A is prohibited. This prohibition applies to students, independent contractors, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel.
- E. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the district shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying.
- F. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen or negate the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- G. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.
- H. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.
- I. A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, retaliation, or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline or other remedial responses for that act in accordance with the district's policies and procedures, including the district's discipline policy. The district may take into account the following factors:
 - 1. The developmental ages and maturity levels of the parties involved.
 - 2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior.
 - 3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior.
 - 4. The relationship between the parties involved.
 - 5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Consequences for students who commit prohibited acts of bullying may range from remedial responses or positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. The district shall employ research-based developmentally appropriate best practices that include preventative and remedial measures and effective discipline for deterring violations of this policy, apply throughout the district, and foster student, parent, and community participation.

Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge.

Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from district property and events.

- J. The district will act to investigate all complaints of bullying reported to the district and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the district who is found to have violated this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the definitions included in this section apply.

- A. “Bullying” means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:
1. An actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern.
 2. Materially and substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

The term, “bullying,” specifically includes cyberbullying malicious and sadistic conduct and sexual exploitation.

- B. “Cyberbullying” means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social media website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device. The term applies to prohibited conduct which occurs on school premises, on district property, at school functions or activities, on school transportation, or on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists, or off school premises to the extent that it substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment.
- C. “Immediately” means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours.
- D. “Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct” means, but is not limited to, conduct that does the following:
1. Causes physical harm to a student or a student’s property or causes a student to be in reasonable fear of harm to person or property.
 2. Under Minnesota common law, violates a student’s reasonable expectation of privacy, defames a student, or constitutes intentional infliction of emotional distress against a student.
 3. Is directed at any student or students, including those based on a person’s actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation including gender identity and expression, academic status related to student performance, disability,

or status with regard to public assistance, age, or any additional characteristic defined in the Minnesota Human Rights Act (MHRA). However, prohibited conduct need not be based on any particular characteristic defined in this paragraph or the MHRA.

- E. “Malicious and sadistic conduct” means creating a hostile learning environment by acting with the intent to cause harm by intentionally injuring another without just cause or reason or engaging in extreme or excessive cruelty or delighting in cruelty.
- F. “On school premises, on district property, at school functions or activities, or on school transportation” means all district buildings, school grounds, and school property or property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school bus stops, school buses, school vehicles, school contracted vehicles, or any other vehicles approved for district purposes, the area of entrance or departure from school grounds, premises, or events, and all school-related functions, school-sponsored activities, events, or trips. District property also may mean a student’s walking route to or from school for purposes of attending school or school-related functions, activities, or events. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, the district does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.
- G. “Prohibited conduct” means bullying, cyberbullying, malicious and sadistic conduct, sexual exploitation, or retaliation or reprisal for asserting, alleging, reporting, or providing information about such conduct or knowingly making a false report about prohibited conduct.
- H. “Remedial response” means a measure to stop and correct prohibited conduct, prevent prohibited conduct from recurring, and protect, support, and intervene on behalf of a student who is the target or victim of prohibited conduct.
- I. “Student” means a student enrolled in a public school or a charter school.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURE

- A. Any person who believes he or she has been the target or victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or prohibited conduct under this policy shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate district official designated by this policy. A person may report bullying anonymously. However, the district may not rely solely on an anonymous report to determine discipline or other remedial responses.
- B. The district encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the [report form](#) available from the principal or building supervisor of each building, on the district’s website or available in the district office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.
- C. The building principal, the principal’s designee, or the building supervisor

(hereinafter the “building report taker”) is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct at the building level. Any person may report bullying or other prohibited conduct directly to a district human rights officer or the superintendent. If the complaint involves the building report taker, the complaint shall be made or filed directly with the superintendent or the district human rights officer by the reporting party or complainant.

The building report taker shall ensure that this policy and its procedures, practices, consequences, and sanctions are fairly and fully implemented and shall serve as the primary contact on policy and procedural matters. The building report taker or a third party designated by the district shall be responsible for the investigation. The building report taker shall provide information about available community resources to the target or victim of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, the perpetrator, and other affected individuals as appropriate.

- D. A teacher, school administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other school employee shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying. Any such person who witnesses, observes, receives a report of, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct shall make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct and shall inform the building report taker immediately. School district personnel who fail to inform the building report taker of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct or who fail to make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct in a timely manner may be subject to disciplinary action.
- E. Reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law. The building report taker, in conjunction with the responsible authority, shall be responsible for keeping and regulating access to any report of bullying and the record of any resulting investigation.
- F. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct will not affect the complainant’s or reporter’s future employment, grades, work assignments, or educational or work environment.
- G. The district will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the district’s obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations.

V. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

- A. Within three school days of the receipt of a complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct, the district shall undertake or authorize an investigation by the building report taker or a third party designated by the district.

- B. The building report taker or other appropriate district officials may take immediate steps, at their discretion, to protect the target or victim of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, the complainant, the reporter, and students or others, pending completion of an investigation of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, consistent with applicable law.
- C. The alleged perpetrator of the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be allowed the opportunity to present a defense during the investigation or prior to the imposition of discipline or other remedial responses.
- D. Upon completion of an investigation that determines that bullying or other prohibited conduct has occurred, the district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited conduct. Remedial responses to the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be tailored to the particular incident and nature of the conduct and shall take into account the factors specified in Section II.F. of this policy. District action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements; applicable statutory authority, including the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act; the student discipline policy and other applicable district policies; and applicable regulations.
- E. The district is not authorized to disclose to a victim private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the district. School officials will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of students who are targets of bullying or other prohibited conduct and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of alleged perpetrators of bullying or other prohibited conduct who have been involved in a reported and confirmed bullying incident of the remedial or disciplinary action taken, to the extent permitted by law.
- F. In order to prevent or respond to bullying or other prohibited conduct committed by or directed against a child with a disability, the district shall, when determined appropriate by the child's individualized education program (IEP) team or Section 504 team, allow the child's IEP or Section 504 plan to be drafted to address the skills and proficiencies the child needs as a result of the child's disability to allow the child to respond to or not to engage in bullying or other prohibited conduct.

VI. RETALIATION OR REPRISAL

The district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the district who commits an act of reprisal or who retaliates against any person who asserts, alleges, or makes a good faith report of alleged bullying or prohibited conduct, who provides information about bullying or prohibited conduct, who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation of alleged bullying or prohibited conduct, or who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying or prohibited conduct. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, harassment, or

intentional disparate treatment. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to deter violations and to appropriately discipline the individual(s) who engaged in the prohibited conduct. Remedial responses to the prohibited conduct shall be tailored to the particular incident and nature of the conduct and shall take into account the factors specified in this policy.

VII. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- A. Consistent with its applicable policies and practices, the district must discuss this policy with students, school personnel and volunteers and provide appropriate training for all district personnel to prevent, identify, and respond to prohibited conduct. The district must establish a training cycle for school personnel to occur during a period not to exceed every three school years. Newly employed school personnel must receive the training within the first year of their employment with the district. The district or a school administrator may accelerate the training cycle or provide additional training based on a particular need or circumstance. This policy shall be included in employee handbooks, training materials, and publications on school rules, procedures, and standards of conduct, which materials shall also be used to publicize this policy.
- B. The district shall require ongoing professional development, consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.60, to build the skills of all school personnel who regularly interact with students to identify, prevent, and appropriately address bullying and other prohibited conduct. Such professional development includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Developmentally appropriate strategies both to prevent and to immediately and effectively intervene to stop prohibited conduct.
 - 2. The complex dynamics affecting a perpetrator, target, and witnesses to prohibited conduct.
 - 3. Research on prohibited conduct, including specific categories of students at risk for perpetrating or being the target or victim of bullying or other prohibited conduct in school.
 - 4. The incidence and nature of cyberbullying.
 - 5. Internet safety and cyberbullying.
- C. The district annually will provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this district policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying and other prohibited conduct.
- D. The administration of the district is directed to implement programs and other initiatives to prevent bullying, to respond to bullying in a manner that does not stigmatize the target or victim, and to make resources or referrals to resources available to targets or victims of bullying.
- E. The administration is encouraged to provide developmentally appropriate instruction and is directed to review programmatic instruction to determine if

adjustments are necessary to help students identify and prevent or reduce bullying and other prohibited conduct, to value diversity in school and society, to develop and improve students' knowledge and skills for solving problems, managing conflict, engaging in civil discourse, and recognizing, responding to, and reporting bullying or other prohibited conduct, and to make effective prevention and intervention programs available to students.

The administration must establish strategies for creating a positive school climate and use evidence-based social-emotional learning to prevent and reduce discrimination and other improper conduct.

The administration is encouraged, to the extent practicable, to take such actions as it may deem appropriate to accomplish the following:

1. Engage all students in creating a safe and supportive school environment.
 2. Partner with parents and other community members to develop and implement prevention and intervention programs.
 3. Engage all students and adults in integrating education, intervention, and other remedial responses into the school environment.
 4. Train student bystanders to intervene in and report incidents of bullying and other prohibited conduct to the schools' primary contact person.
 5. Teach students to advocate for themselves and others.
 6. Prevent inappropriate referrals to special education of students who may engage in bullying or other prohibited conduct.
 7. Foster student collaborations that, in turn, foster a safe and supportive school climate.
- F. The district may implement violence prevention and character development education programs to prevent or reduce policy violations. Such programs may offer instruction on character education including, but not limited to, character qualities such as attentiveness, truthfulness, respect for authority, diligence, gratefulness, self-discipline, patience, forgiveness, respect for others, peacemaking, and resourcefulness.
- G. The district shall inform affected students and their parents of rights they may have under state and federal data practices laws to obtain access to data related to an incident and their right to contest the accuracy or completeness of the data. The district may accomplish this requirement by inclusion of all or applicable parts of its protection and privacy of pupil records policy in the Student Citizenship Handbook.

VIII. NOTICE

- A. The district will give annual notice of this policy to students, parents or guardians, and staff, and this policy shall appear in the student handbook.
- B. Article II, paragraph D, regarding malicious and sadistic conduct must be conspicuously posted throughout each school building. This policy shall be

conspicuously posted in the administrative offices of the school and district in summary form.

- C. This policy must be distributed to each district or school employee and independent contractor, if the contractor regularly interacts with students, at the time of employment with the district or the school.
- D. Notice of the rights and responsibilities of students and their parents under this policy must be included in the student discipline policy distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year.
- E. This policy shall be available to all parents and other school community members in an electronic format in the languages appearing on the district's or a school's website, consistent with the district policies and practices.
- F. The district shall provide an electronic copy of its most recently amended policy to the Commissioner of Education.

IX. POLICY REVIEW

The board shall, on a cycle consistent with other district policies, review and revise this policy. The policy shall be made consistent with Minnesota Statutes, sections 121A.031 and 121A.0312 and other applicable law. Revisions shall be made to the extent practicable in consultation with students, parents, and community organizations.

Policy 514 Bullying Prohibition

Adopted: 08.26.2006; Updated: 11.22.2010, 04.23.12, 07.14.14, INSERT DATE; Non-Substantive Update: 08.26.2021;
Statutory Update: 07.10.2023, 06.10.2024

Board of Education

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659

Northfield, Minnesota

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.05, Subds. 9, 11, 13, and 17 (Definition of ~~Public School~~)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.232 (Character Development Education)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.03 (Sexual, Religious and Racial Harassment and Violence Model Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Student Bullying Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.0311 (Notice of Rights and Responsibilities of Students and Parents under the Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.0312 (Malicious and Sadistic Conduct)
Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.69 (Hazing Policy)
Minn. Stat. § Ch. 124E (Charter School)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)
20 U.S.C. § 1232g *et seq.* (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)
34 C.F.R. §§ 99.1 - 99.67 (Family Educational Rights and Privacy)

Cross References:

MSBA/MASA Board Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 414 (Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 415 (Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 423 (Employee-Student Relationships)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 501 (School Weapons Policy)

MSBA/MASA Board Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 507 (Corporal Punishment)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 521 (Student Disability Nondiscrimination)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 522 (Title IX Sex Nondiscrimination)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 524.2 (Use of Technology and Telecommunications Systems by Students)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 526 (Hazing Prohibition)
MSBA/MASA Board Policy 709 (Student Transportation Safety)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 711 (Video Recording on School Buses)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 712 (Video Surveillance Other Than on Buses)

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Minutes

October 27, 2025
District Office Board Room

1. Call to Order

School Board Chair Claudia Gonzalez-George called the regular meeting of the Board of Education of Independent School District No. 659 to order at 6:00 p.m. Present: Butler, Epstein, Gonzalez-George, Miller, Nelson, and Quinnell. Absent: Goerwitz. This meeting was open to the public, live-streamed and recorded, and access to the recording was posted on the school district website.

2. Agenda Approval/Table File

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Epstein, the board approved the agenda.

3. Public Comment

There were four public comments.

4. Announcements and Recognitions

- The girls cross country team won their fifth consecutive Big Nine conference championship, setting a new school record for the most consecutive conference titles by any team - boys or girls.
- Congratulations to both the Boys and Girls Raider Cross Country teams, who are headed to the state meet at the University of Minnesota on Saturday, Nov. 1.
- Congratulations to the boys soccer team, who advanced to the state semi-finals against The Blake School on Tuesday, Oct. 28 at U.S. Bank Stadium after an exciting last-second quarterfinal win against Sartell last week.
- The volleyball team won the Big Nine title and will compete in the Section 1AAA semifinal at home against Kasson-Mantorville on Wednesday, Oct. 29.
- The football team defeated Owatonna on Saturday and will compete against Rochester Mayo in the Section 1AAAAA Championship on Saturday, Nov. 1.
- The first high school choir concert of the year was held last Thursday, with other music groups holding their first concerts in the next few weeks.
- The high school fall play will be held on Friday, Nov. 7 and Saturday, Nov. 8.

5. Items for Discussion and Reports

- a. Activities Department Improvement Showcase. Activities Director John Mahal provided the board with an overview of the activities department's successes and highlights in 2024-2025 and the focus areas for the 2025-2026 school year.
- b. Review of the State of the District. Each year, Superintendent Hillmann shares with the Northfield Chamber of Commerce and Northfield Rotary the state of the district. He reviewed that presentation with the board. He also reviewed the district's Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) results.

6. Committee Reports

- a. All-District Committee Report. Superintendent Hillmann provided an update on the All-District Committee meetings held on Monday, Oct. 6, 2025. Six committees met that evening: Activities, Communications, Equity, Facilities, Finance, and the Special Education Advisory, and approximately 36 people participated. The groups met together briefly before splitting into individual committees. These groups will meet again on Monday, Dec. 1 and Monday, March 2.
- b. Facilities Committee Report. Board Member Goerwitz provided an update on the facilities committee, which met on Monday, Oct. 6, 2025.
- c. Northfield Forward Report. Superintendent Hillmann provided an update on Northfield Forward, which met on Monday, Oct. 20, 2025.

7. Consent Agenda

On a motion by Miller, seconded by Nelson, the board approved the consent agenda.

- a. Minutes. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on Oct. 14, 2025.
- b. Gift Agreements. Gift agreements included in the board packet.
- c. Overnight Fieldtrip Request. Nordic Skiing Head Coach Craig Cardinal requested board approval to take 20 student athletes to Ironwood, MI Dec. 29-31, 2025 for a Nordic winter training trip.
- d. Personnel Items.
 - i. Appointments
 1. Braeden Klaus, Special Education EA/PCA for 6.75 hours/day and General Ed EA for .25 hours/day at Spring Creek, effective 10/29/2025. Step 1, Special Education, \$21.86/hour and Step 1 General Education, \$19.79/hour.
 2. Joshua Paulson, Special Education EA/PCA for 6.75 hours/day at the Middle School effective 10/29/2025. Step 2, \$22.30/hour.
 3. Evelyn Winget, Child Nutrition Student Associate for up to 1 hour/day at the ALC effective 10/27/2025. \$11.13/hour.
 4. Reed Hagberg, Softball/Basketball Official with Community Education/Recreation for 4 hours/week, effective 11/9/2025-5/31/2026. \$30/game.
 5. Neil Hardie, Community School Site Assistant at Spring Creek for up to 10 hours/week effective 11/3/2025-5/14/2026. Step 2, \$19.37/hour.
 6. Miles Poole, Instructor Assistant & Swim Assistant with Community Education/Recreation for 4 hours/week, effective 11/9/2025-5/31/2026. Step 2, \$15.28/hour.
 - ii. Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment
 1. Wren Becker, Kid Ventures Site Assistant at Bridgewater for 28.5 hours/week, change to Kid Ventures Site Assistant at Bridgewater for 25.5 hours/week and Kid Ventures Site Assistant at Spring Creek for 3.0 hours/week effective 11/3/2025.
 2. Tallie Berkvam-Peter, 1.0 FTE Kindergarten Teacher at Spring Creek, add Community School Licensed Teacher up to 8 hours/week effective 10/29/2025-5/14/2026. \$40/hour.
 3. Thomas Dickerson, Special Education Teacher at the High School, add Head Middle School Wrestling Coach effective 11/17/2025. \$3,676 stipend.
 4. Andrea James, Special Education EA/PCA at the NCEC for 9.75 hours/week, change to 16.75 hours/week effective 10/23/2025-12/19/2025.
 5. Marcy Korynta, School Psychologist at the Middle School, add Middle School Fitness Center Coach for Quarter 2 and Quarter 3, effective 11/4/2025. \$2,661.20 stipend.
 6. Jack Kramer, Instructor Lead as needed for Community Ed, add Softball/Basketball Official as needed, effective 11/1/2025-5/31/2026. \$30/game.
 7. Cala Landsteiner, Cafeteria Supervision EA for 2.0 hours/day at Bridgewater, change to 2.25 hours/day effective 10/20/2025-6/10/2026.
 8. Alexandra McFarlane, EA for 7 hours/day at Spring Creek, add Community School Site Assistant up to 8 hours/week effective 10/27/2025-5/14/2026. Step 4, \$20.72/hour.
 9. Michael Shaeffer, EA at the High School, add Speech Judge as needed effective 11/1/2025. \$100/event.
 10. Adam Danielson, Instructional Coach and Associate Interim Principal at Bridgewater, extend Associate Interim Principal role through 11/10/2025. \$225/day stipend for a total of \$1,350 in additional salary.
 11. Amy Merritt, Substitute Special Education EA/PCA for 6.75 hours/day at Bridgewater, change to regular employee Special Education EA/PCA effective 10/1/2025. Step 4, \$23.51/hour.
 12. Jenna Schlatter, 1.0 FTE Grade 6 Teacher at the Middle School, add Community School Licensed Teacher up to 8 hours/week effective 10/29/2025-5/14/2026. \$40/hour.
 13. Brigitte Tisdale, .8 FTE Title I Teacher at Greenvale Park, add .15 FTE Title I Teacher at St. Dominic School for a total of .95 FTE, effective 10/27/2025-6/10/2026.
 14. Justine Voronkova, Special Education EA/PCA for 6.75 hours/day at the High School, change to 4.0 hours/day at the High School and 3.0 hours/day at Bridgewater for a total of 7.0 hours/day, effective 10/21/2025.
 - iii. Leave of Absence
 1. Sarah Marohl, Educational Assistant at Greenvale Park, leave of absence beginning 11/17/2025 through approximately 2/20/2026.
 2. Ryan Sweeney, Technology Specialist at the Middle School, FMLA leave of absence beginning 10/23/2025-11/7/2025.
 - iv. Retirements/Resignations/Terminations
 1. Pam Fickenschner, Assistant Nordic Ski Coach, resignation effective 10/15/2025.
 2. Ruby Holman, Assistant Softball Coach, resignation effective 10/17/2025.

3. Anne Waterland, CNA I at the High School, resignation effective 11/3/2025.

- e. Grant Application. Director of Community Education Erin Bailey requested school board approval for \$600,000 from the Minnesota Department of Education for a grant to support the Northfield Community School initiative at Greenvale Park Elementary. This amount would cover the full grant period of Feb. 1, 2026 to June 30, 2029. The Northfield Community School initiative will dramatically expand out-of-school time programming. It will increase the number of Greenvale Park students and alumni who can access the free out-of-school time programming by offering after school programming four days per week, evening programming twice per week, programming during school breaks, and expanded summer programming.

8. Items for Individual Action

- a. Resolution of School Board Supporting FORM A Application to Minnesota State High School League Foundation. On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Butler, the board approved by roll call the resolution supporting the district's application to the Minnesota State High School League Foundation for a FORM A grant to offset student activity fees. Voting "yes" was Butler, Epstein, Miller, Nelson, Quinnell, and Gonzalez-George. No one voted "no."
- b. Resolution of School Board Supporting FORM B Application to Minnesota State High School League Foundation. On a motion by Nelson, seconded by Butler, the board approved by roll call the resolution supporting the district's application to the Minnesota State High School League Foundation for a FORM B grant to provide seminars/training opportunities or support for specific school functions for students/faculty members/officials and others who are involved in athletic and fine arts programs. Voting "yes" was Butler, Epstein, Miller, Nelson, Quinnell, and Gonzalez-George. No one voted "no."
- c. Policy Committee Recommendations. On a motion by Epstein, seconded by Miller, the board approved the policy committee's recommended updates to policies 448, 504, 508, 510, and 511.

9. Items for Information

- a. Construction Update No. 17. Superintendent Hillmann provided an update on the NHS construction project.
- b. Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Presentation and Public Hearing. ALC Director Daryl Kehler will summarize the 2025-2026 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Plan at the public hearing scheduled at 5:15 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 10. This public hearing will precede the regular school board meeting.

10. Future Meetings

- a. Monday, November 10, 2025, 5:15 p.m., Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Presentation and Public Hearing, Northfield DO Boardroom
- b. Monday, November 10, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- c. Monday, November 24, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom
- d. Monday, December 8, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, Northfield DO Boardroom

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Quinnell, seconded by Epstein, the board approved to adjourn the regular board meeting at 7:24 p.m.

Amy Goerwitz
School Board Clerk

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING DONATIONS

The following resolution was moved by _____ and seconded by _____:

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 123B.02, Sub. 6 provides: “The board may receive, for the benefit of the district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose and apply the same to the purpose designated. In that behalf, the board may act as trustee of any trust created for the benefit of the district, or for the benefit of pupils thereof, including trusts created to provide pupils of the district with advanced education after completion of high school, in the advancement of education.”; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 465.03 provides: “Any city, county, school district or town may accept a grant or devise of real or personal property and maintain such property for the benefit of its citizens in accordance with the terms prescribed by the donor. Nothing herein shall authorize such acceptance or use for religious or sectarian purposes. Every such acceptance shall be by resolution of the governing body adopted by a two-thirds majority of its members, expressing such terms in full.”; and

WHEREAS, every such acceptance shall be by resolution of the governing body adopted by a two-thirds majority of its members, expressing such terms in full;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the School Board of Northfield Public Schools, ISD 659, gratefully accepts the following donations as identified below:

The vote on adoption of the Resolution was as follows:

Aye:

Nay:

Absent:

Whereupon, said Resolution was declared duly adopted.

By: Claudia Gonzalez-George, Chair

By: Amy Goerwitz, Clerk

Date of the bequest, donation, or gift:	Amount:	Who the bequest, donation, or gift is from:	What is the bequest, donation, or gift for?
			1. \$25/student x 552 students = \$13,800 2. \$3.18 x 552 students - hat/pj funding back to classes = \$1,753 3. Art = \$1,000 4. Choir = \$400 5. Music = \$800 6. Science = \$800 7. PE = \$800 8. SPED (certified non classroom teachers) = \$1,125 9. Non-Auxiliary teachers = \$460 10. Social Work = \$400 11. Snack Funds for McKinney-Vento Students = \$200 12. Reading/Math Corps = \$250 13. Scholastic News Subscription = \$3,795.04 14. 1st Grade Bell Museum Bussing = \$827.12 15. Kindergarten Windy Willow Bussing = \$463.20 16. 3rd Windy Willow Bussing \$430.10 17. Learning A to Z Renewal = \$248.00 18. School Supply Fees = \$18,280
10/24/2025	\$45,831	Bridgewater Booster Club	
10/27/2025	\$250	Rebound Enterprises	Rice County Area United Way worksite campaign
10/23/2025	\$550	College City Beverage	Adult Basketball League
10/22/2025	\$550	Community Resource Bank	Adult Basketball League
11/4/2025	\$500	Dick's Sanitation, Inc.	Robotics Sponsorship
11/4/2025	\$250	Merchants Bank	Robotics Sponsorship
11/4/2025	9 wooden puzzles	Mary Jo Forbes-Lofquist	For Early Ventures students to use.
11/5/2025	\$300	Katie & Peter Gittins	Robotics donation
10/22/25	\$11	Laura Heiman	SC Gr 3 Bowling Donation
10/28/25	\$50	Herb Hemenway	Robotics Sponsorship
11/3/25	\$20	Amanda Volden	NMS PBIS/PRIDE Donation

Mid-Year Evaluation 2025-2026

Name: _____

Your comments will be shared with the board and Dr. Hillmann with your name removed.
Please use your 1:1 to further expand on any comments or resources you can offer.

Dr. Hillmann's Self-Evaluation

Board Member Comments

Focus Area 1 of 5

The superintendent will prioritize career and technical education by developing a school-to-work program for general education high school students beginning with the 2026-27 school year. (A school-to-work program already exists for students receiving special education services.)

Update, use as much space as needed:

Respond to Update:

Challenges, leave blank if none:

Comment on Challenges:

What support could you use? Leave blank if you have what you need.

Any resources you can offer?

Status (drop down menu)

Other comments on this Focus Area:

Dr. Hillmann's Self-Evaluation

Board Member Comments

Focus Area 2 of 5

The superintendent will focus on supporting necessary system adaptations resulting from the district's priority-based budget reductions.

Update, use as much space as needed:

Respond to Update:

Challenges, leave blank if none:

Comment on Challenges:

What support could you use? Leave blank if you have what you need.

Any resources you can offer?

Status (drop down menu)

Other comments on this Focus Area:

Dr. Hillmann's Self-Evaluation		Board Member Comments

Focus Area 3 of 5	The superintendent will prioritize thoughtful innovation by planning and executing the first Northfield School District Artificial Intelligence Development Academy.	
Update, use as much space as needed:		Respond to Update:
Challenges, leave blank if none:		Comment on Challenges:
What support could you use? Leave blank if you have what you need.		Any resources you can offer?
Status (drop down menu)		Other comments on this Focus Area:

Dr. Hillmann's Self-Evaluation		Board Member Comments
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Focus Area 4 of 5	The superintendent will study enrollment to understand why families from other districts choose to open enroll in Northfield, as well as the reasons Northfield families select other education options for their children.	
Update, use as much space as needed:		Respond to Update:
Challenges, leave blank if none:		Comment on Challenges:
What support could you use? Leave blank if you have what you need.		Any resources you can offer?
Status (drop down menu)		Other comments on this Focus Area:

Dr. Hillmann's Self-Evaluation	Board Member Comments
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Focus Area 5 of 5

The superintendent will continue seeking feedback from parents to improve BIPOC students' experiences and feelings of belonging.

Update, use as much space as needed:

Respond to Update:

Challenges, leave blank if none:

Comment on Challenges:

What support could you use? Leave blank if you have what you need.

Any resources you can offer?

Status (drop down menu)

Other comments on this Focus Area:

Outside of these Focus Areas, do you have any other comments?

Outside of these Focus Areas, do you have any feedback for Dr. Hillmann?

MEMO TO: Dr. Matt Hillmann
 Board of Education
 FROM: Chris Neset
 DATE: November 3, 2025
 RE: 2025-2026 Enrollment Options Report

Northfield Public Schools has 480 students attending our schools from other school districts this school year compared to 489 last year. 882 Northfield students are attending school elsewhere, including other public schools (288), charter schools (248), home schools (192) and non-public schools (154). Last year 886 students attended school elsewhere.

Northfield Students Going to Non-Public Schools:		
	2024-25	2025-26
Academy of Holy Angels	1	1
Academy for the Deaf/Blind	4	6
Acellus Academy	1	1
Bethlehem Academy	9	10
Bloomington Lutheran	1	
Breakaway Academy	1	1
Calvary Prep	1	
Chesterton Academy	1	2
Divine Mercy Catholic	3	4
First Baptist-Rosemount	1	
Glory Academy	1	1
Good Shephard	3	3
Holy Cross Catholic	2	4
Montessori	2	
Ramalynn Montessori Academy		2
Shattuck-St. Mary's	5	5
St. Croix Lutheran	3	3
St. Dominic's	73	102
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Cath.	3	3
St. Paul's Lutheran	3	3
St. Thomas Academy	1	1
Universal Academy		1
Unity Catholic	1	1
Total Non-Public	120	154

Northfield Students Going to Home School:		
	2024-25	2025-26
Grade K	14	6
Grade 1	7	16
Grade 2	20	11
Grade 3	21	23
Grade 4	12	20
Grade 5	14	12
Grade 6	15	15
Grade 7	18	16
Grade 8	17	17
Grade 9	13	17
Grade 10	14	13
Grade 11	9	15
Grade 12	11	11
Total Home School	185	192
Total Families	77	92

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Public Schools	Northfield Students Out		Non-Resident Students In	
	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26
Albert Lea	1			
Brooklyn Center	3	2		
Burnsville	2		3	4
Byron			1	1
Cannon Falls	14	13	18	20
Cannon Valley Spec Ed	20	28		
Chaska	2	2		
Dakota County Spec Ed	1	2		
Eden Prairie	1	1		
Faribault	8	6	312	303
Farmington	20	17	16	15
Fergus Falls	8	8		
Hastings		1	1	4
Hopkins	1			
Houston	2	2		
Intermediate 287	1	1		
Jordan	1			
Kenyon-Wanamingo	3	2	36	28
Lakeville	23	20	11	7
Medford	1	1	5	3
Meeker/Wright Spec Ed.	1			
Melrose			1	1
Milaca		1		
Minneapolis				1
Minnetonka	2	2		
NE Metro	1	2		
New Dominion	1	2		
New Prague	28	31	14	16
Owatonna		3	5	3
Plainview-Elgin-Millville	2			
Prior Lake	5	3		
Randolph	118	112	24	20
Red Rock Central			1	
Richfield		1		
Rochester			2	
Robbinsdale	1			
Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan	5	9	3	5

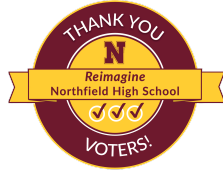
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Roseville	4	3		
Shakopee				1
St. Francis		1		
St. Louis Park			1	1
St. Paul-Maplewood	1			
St. Peter		1		
SW Metro Intermediate		1		
SW Metro Sped Coop	1	1		
Tri City United	6	8	27	35
Triton			1	1
Waseca			1	1
Waterville-Elysian-				
Morristown			6	10
West St Paul-Mendota				
Heights	1	1		
Worthington	3			
Totals	292	288	489	480

Northfield Students Going to Charter Schools:

	2024-25	2025-26
5 Rivers Online	1	
Arcadia	87	92
Aspen Academy	2	1
Bluesky	1	1
Cannon River STEM	5	
Edvisions Off Campus	4	4
El Colegio	1	
Fit Academy	2	2
Great Oaks Academy	1	1
Liberty Univ Online	2	
Minnehaha Academy	1	
MTCS Connections	21	16
Nerstrand Charter	6	3
Penn Foster Online	1	
Perpich Center	2	1
Prairie Creek	128	126
Spectrum Elk River	4	
Yinghua Academy	1	1
Total Charter Schools	269	248

Northfield Public Schools - Enrollment Options History															
	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
Northfield Students Out															
Cannon Falls	13	14	9	9	4	3	2	13	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
CVSEC	28	20	20	19	20	19	21	22	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faribault	6	8	3	1	4	6	8	5	6	5	5	9	9	20	17
Farmington	17	20	24	24	26	28	22	19	20	20	23	27	20	18	24
Lakeville	20	23	20	26	25	23	24	25	20	22	22	24	18	21	14
New Prague	31	28	34	32	35	37	34	30	27	21	23	22	22	20	16
Randolph	112	118	112	112	95	74	72	59	65	62	63	55	45	43	29
Tri-City United	8	6	7	8	8	6	7	6	5	5	10	10	9	11	10
Other	53	55	58	39	41	41	37	41	24	47	33	40	70	58	54
Total	288	292	287	270	258	237	227	220	189	182	179	187	193	191	164
Non-Resident In															
Cannon Falls	20	18	18	18	18	9	11	14	13	7	8	13	17	22	15
Faribault	303	312	313	302	309	326	293	266	252	202	167	171	167	148	144
Farmington	15	16	12	16	13	15	14	19	20	13	12	10	12	12	13
Kenyon-Wanamingo	28	36	35	31	28	28	24	17	17	15	17	15	14	18	21
Lakeville	7	11	13	14	14	10	6	11	13	10	8	5	2	12	11
New Prague	16	14	15	12	8	9	11	19	25	19	22	16	19	20	20
Randolph	20	24	27	20	21	24	22	19	28	17	14	18	24	19	16
Tri-City United	35	27	22	21	18	22	27	21	24	20	21	22	16	14	14
Other	36	31	21	30	25	12	11	17	19	10	12	12	26	27	22
Total	480	489	476	464	454	455	419	403	411	313	281	282	297	292	276
Northfield to Non-Public															
St. Dominic's	102	73	63	82	80	99	108	104	100	108	122	122	151	168	169
Other	52	47	49	56	48	54	45	41	40	38	36	41	34	64	66
Total	154	120	112	138	128	153	153	145	140	146	158	163	185	232	235
Northfield to Home School	192	185	174	170	180	207	150	137	130	113	120	121	109	115	123
Total Families	92	77	74	79	94										
Northfield to Charter															
Prairie Creek	126	128	124	134	137	148	150	152	153	159	152	156	153	166	145
Arcadia	92	87	81	93	107	90	86	95	99	94	90	107	104	120	91
MTCS Connections	16	21	15	12	23										
Other	14	34	24	21	20	40	26	31	28	25	30	25	11	14	18
Total	248	270	244	260	287	278	262	278	280	278	272	288	268	300	254
Total Student In	480	489	476	464	454	455	419	403	411	313	281	282	297	292	276
Total Students Out	882	867	817	838	853	875	792	780	739	719	729	759	755	838	776
Net In/Out	-402	-378	-341	-374	-399	-420	-373	-377	-328	-406	-448	-477	-458	-546	-500
Percent Change	6.35%	10.85%	-8.82%	-6.27%	-5.00%	12.60%	-1.06%	14.94%	-19.21%	-9.38%	-6.08%	4.15%	-16.12%	9.20%	



Reimagine Northfield High School Bond Referendum Projects | Construction Update No. 18 | Nov. 10, 2025

Recent highlights

- Construction document development continues.
- Carleton College has completed its \$2 million donation to the district, wiring the final payment on Oct. 23.
- Project poster boards have been provided to each school for display. These include a QR code that directs interested community members to the [video walkthrough of the reimaged Northfield High School](#).



Upcoming meetings and discussions

- Monthly budget meetings are held between the district, Wold, and Knutson to keep the project on track.
- Project oversight committee meetings are held twice a month, as needed.