

**Local Plan to Implement
Michigan Criteria for Determination of Specific Learning Disability**

MDE Requirement for Local Plan of SLD Determination

In May 2010, the Michigan Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services under the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) published “Michigan Criteria for Determining the Existence of a Specific Learning Disability” (hereafter referred to as MDE Criteria Document for SLD). This document issued the following requirement of local school districts.

On or before September 1, 2010, each local educational agency (LEA) and public school academy (PSA) must publicly post on their web site, or make public through other means, the process or combination of processes which will be used by the LEA or PSA to determine the existence of a SLD. (§ 300.307(b) and § 300.600(d)(2)).

This requirement greatly reduces the previous reliance on use of “severe discrepancy” formulas and requires consideration of a Response to Intervention (RtI) model for identifying students with specific learning disabilities as an alternative to the discrepancy model.

In part, federal regulation § 300.307(a) of IDEA states:

(a) A State must adopt ... criteria for determining whether a child has a SLD . . . In addition, the criteria adopted by the State –

(1) Must not require the use of severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement for determining whether a child has a SLD . . .

(2) Must permit the use of a process based on the child’s response to scientific, research-based intervention; . . .

Local Statement of Plan Adoption

The constituent local education agency (LEA) superintendents of the Lapeer County Intermediate School District have adopted the following shared guidelines for determination of Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) for their individual districts (See [LCISD Guidance for the Determination of Specific Learning Disabilities](#))

The Lapeer County model for the identification of Specific Learning Disabilities emphasizes the full and individual evaluation as a process of data collection that includes multiple methods of assessing student performance with input from parents, teachers, instructional specialists, and school psychologists. The purpose of the evaluation is to surround the student of concern with the best and most comprehensive information possible, including Response to Intervention data, to make valid and appropriate recommendations as to the student’s eligibility for special education and, more importantly, educationally relevant recommendations for instructional strategies, supports and services.

The choice of LCISD constituent LEAs is to use a Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses as the decision process for the determination of SLD.

Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses Process

The districts use a Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses Process for the determination of a Specific Learning Disability for all buildings and all grades and include the following:

1. The student does not achieve adequately for the student’s age or to meet State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the areas identified at 34 CFR §300.309 (a)(1)(i) when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student’s age or State-approved grade-level standards; and
2. The student exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, State-approved grade-level standards and intellectual development, that is determined by the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET) to be relevant to the identification of SLD, using appropriate assessments, consistent with the IDEA Evaluation Procedures and Additional Requirements for Evaluations and Reevaluations.

Links on Learning Disabilities

[LCISD Guidance for the Determination of Learning Disabilities](#)
[Michigan Criteria for determining the existence of a specific learning disability](#)