

Special Education

Within the Division of Teaching and Learning Support this team:

- Operates under various state and federal statutes and regulations regarding the education of students with special needs.
- Maintains compliance with state and federal laws governing students with disabilities through technical assistance to school districts, distribution of grant funding, development of pre-service and in-service training programs, complaint investigation, mediation, due process hearing and compliance reviews. [Federal funds]
- Provides or arranges for technical assistance or professional development related to any department activity as needed
- Conducts district monitoring on a 5-year cycle to verify compliance with state and federal regulations related to special education
- Conducts meetings, work sessions, conferences to help school staff and administrators meet the goals of the district and the department
- Ensures that children receive early screening and intervention for health developmental and learning needs
- Collaborates with other agencies to ensure students have access to necessary supports and services:
 - Health (general, oral, mental, and behavioral)
 - Part C and Early Intervention services
 - Headstart and Daycare services
 - Assistance and supporting Autism Resource Center
 - Assistance and supporting Secondary Transition Supports and Services as well as Department of Vocational Rehabilitation activities
 - University of Alaska Statewide System—Alaska Teacher Placement
 - Special Educators for Alaska Project: Statewide Mentor Program
- Assists with and supports:
 - The Alternate Assessment
 - Response to Instruction initiatives
 - Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports initiatives
 - McKinney-Vento initiatives
 - Correspondence and Home School initiatives
- Preschool handicapped: Provides funding to school districts for special education services to disabled preschool children ages 3 to 5 years. [Federal funds]

- Special Education State Personnel Development Grant: Integrates teacher recruitment with mentoring. The project's purpose is to design and implement a highly innovative and timely strategy addressing problems of recruitment and retention of special education teachers in Alaska. A key project component is the recruitment and training of special education field mentors matched with special education teachers in their first or second year of teaching.
- In order to help districts and others understand Special Education a guidance document Alaska Special Education Handbook has been published and is reviewed yearly and updated as necessary. This document is located on the EED website:

<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/sped/Handbook.html>

- Intensive needs

The Department of Education & Early Development developed the *Training Materials for Determining Eligibility for Intensive Needs Students* to provide assistance to school districts in correctly identifying and documenting students who may qualify for intensive needs funding.

The training materials contain four sections that will assist school district staff in understanding how the regulations concerning intensive needs students are interpreted and applied. In addition, this document includes a copy of the verification checklist EED staff and/or special education contractor's use when reviewing students who are claimed for intensive needs funding.

The link to the Training Materials may be found on the EED website:

<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/sped/>

IDEA is up for reauthorization during 2009.